Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIX, Issue No. 40 | MONDAY FEBRUARY 16, 2009 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

Juan Pan confident he will NMI's next governor. **PAGE 6**

Judge: Fund issue a Commonwealth problem. **PAGE 7**

# NMI to get $96M in stimulus package

## Local officials urged to use funds wisely, quickly

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantibune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI could get as much as $96 million in new federal funds directly from the $787 billion economic stimulus package that the U.S. Senate passed Friday night. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act now goes to President Obama's desk, where he plans to sign it into law by President's Day.

Delegate Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan urged Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and other local officials to use the funds "wisely and quickly."

The funds are meant to stimulate the CNMI economy right now and help build a better economic future by funding schools, roads, water and sewer systems, government operations, train workers for new jobs, food assistance, and weatherize homes to help people cut back on power expenses, among other things.

Of the $96 million in expected new federal funds for the CNMI, some $8.8 million will go to the Public School System through existing programs, Sablan said.

But Sablan said the federal funds do not come without strings attached. The CNMI government, he said, will have to put together applications for the funds, sometimes competing with other jurisdictions.

*See NMI on Page 4*

*"It is intended to help our economy at this time when we need help the most...So I urge the governor and Commonwealth officials to make full use of these funds in a way that will make the most impact and help get our people and islands out of the economic doldrums."*

—Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan, CNMI Delegate

**HELPING HAND** NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Organizing committee members of the DYS Parent Leadership Summit show the items donated by Laolao Bay Golf Resort. ***See story on Page 5***

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**POLL RESULTS**

**Should Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution be placed on the ballot in 2011?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 54 |
| No | 37 |
| Unsure | 6 |
| No opinion | 7 |

*Sunday, February 15, 2009*

**139 DAYS** without a government budget for FY 2009

## INSIDE

**Deadly Nose-Dive**

A commuter plane that smashed into a house apparently plunged flat to the ground rather than nose-diving, ending up pointed away from the airport it was trying to reach, investigators said Saturday.

Nation...Page 15

**Conan Going Hollywood**

Nearly two dozen guitars are scattered on the floor and sofa in Conan O'Brien's office in Rockefeller Center, most of them gifts from musicians like Eddie Van Halen, Los Lobos, Les Paul and Brian Setzer.

Life & Style... Page 19

# Air Force: B-52 crash caused by equipment position

AP

A 2004 file photo shows a B-52 bomber on the tarmac of the Barksdale AFB in Bossier City, La.

**HONOLULU** (AP)—A deadly B-52 bomber crash off Guam last year was caused by part of the plane's tail assembly being set in the wrong position, a U.S. Air Force investigation report released Friday said.

The plane's stabilizer trim was improperly set between 4.5 and 5.0 degrees nose-down at impact, indicating the aircraft had been in a nose-down descent at low altitude, according to a report by the Air Combat

*See AIR FORCE on Page 4*

# Voluntary 10% pay cut urged among top officials

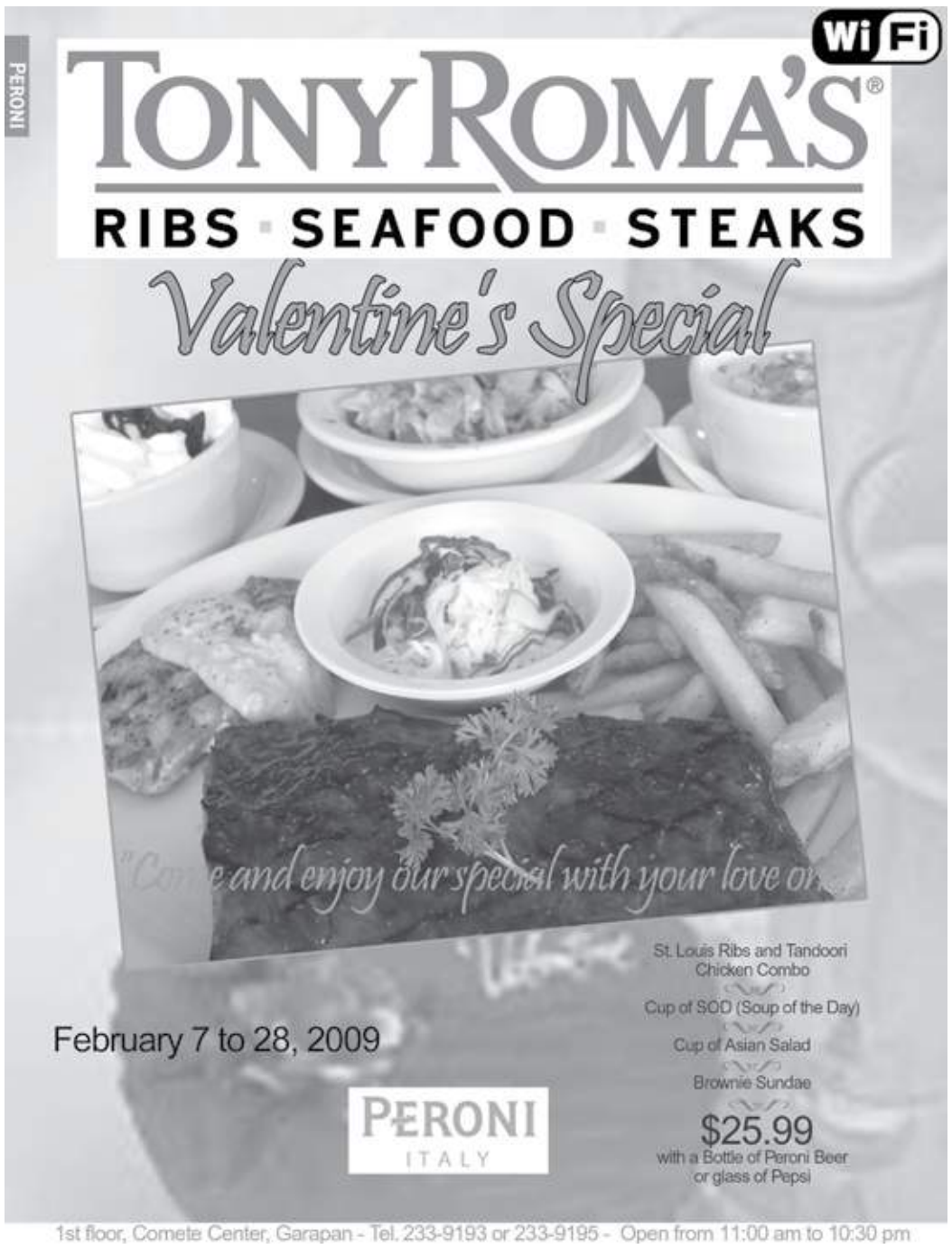
## On top of austerity Fridays, slash in Fund contributions

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantibune.com
REPORTER

Top officials including the governor, lieutenant governor, lawmakers, justices, and judges are encouraged to waive 10 percent of their salaries as part of the Fitial administration-backed measure that also reinstates austerity Fridays/unpaid holidays, cut employer contribution to the Retirement Fund from 18 percent to 11 percent, and grant full reprogramming power to all expenditure authorities.

The voluntary 10 percent pay cut is equivalent to eight hours per pay period.

*See VOLUNTARY on Page 4*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# Local

## Senate approves bill suspending energy efficiency requirements for govt buildings

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Senate passed on Wednesday a House bill suspending for one year certain energy efficiency requirements for new government buildings due to a lack of certified personnel to ensure compliance with federal standards.

House Bill 16-149, introduced by Rep. Stanley Torres and four other House members, now goes to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial for action.

The bill suspends a provision in Public Law 15-23, as amended by P.L. 15-87, which established incentives for producing electricity using alternative or renewable energy.

Subsection 8662(a) requires that for capital projects, the construction of or additions to buildings meet or exceed the standards set forth in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system.

Since the enactment of P.L. 15-23, the government has been required to meet LEED Silver standards for all new buildings.

"However, the Department of Public Works does not have LEED-certified personnel," the bill says.

The lack of LEED-certified personnel at DPW has led to increased construction costs due to delays in structural projects, it adds.

The three-page bill seeks to suspend the provision for one year from the date that the measure becomes law or until DPW obtains a LEED certified professional, whichever comes first.

LEED is a voluntary, consensus-based national rating system for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. It addresses all building types and emphasizes state-of-the-art strategies in five areas: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, and indoor environmental quality.

The suspension period will permit DPW to employ one or

*See SENATE on Page 4*

## High surf, small craft advisories in effect

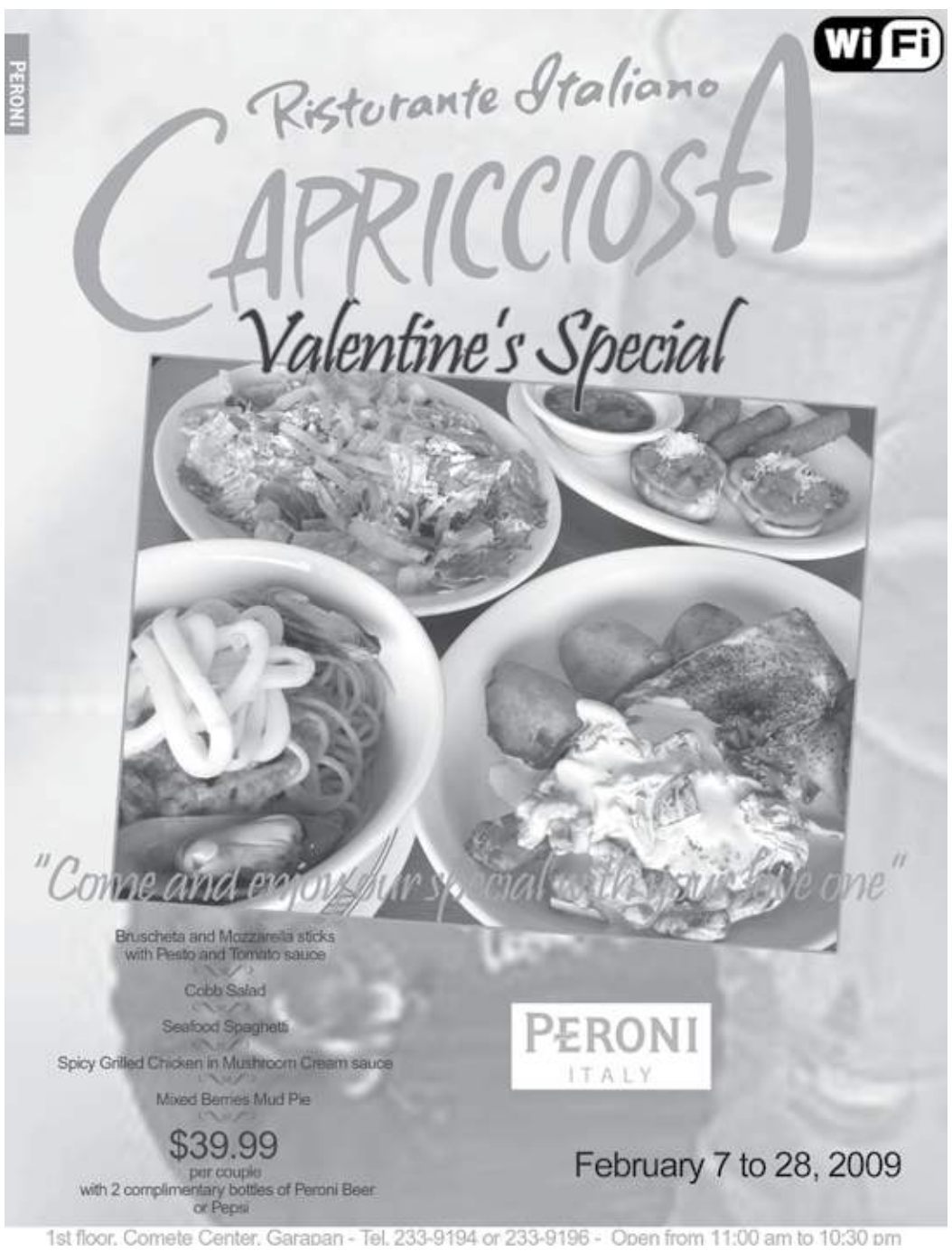
The Emergency Management Office has issued a high surf and small craft advisory as swells from gales east of Japan are expected to impact the northern exposures of Saipan and Tinian through this morning.

Based on the information received from National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, long periods of north swells will combine with trade wind waves to produce combined seas of 10 to 12 feet through today before falling to eight feet by early tomorrow.

EMO's high surf advisory lasts until 6am this morning, as hazardous surf of nine to 10 feet can be expected. A high surf advisory means that high surf will affect exposed reefs and beaches in the advisory area producing dangerous rip currents.

Meanwhile, the agency said small craft advisory remains in effect until 6am tomorrow.

Due to the rising seas and surf in the region, EMO is strongly advising the public—especially beachgoers, fishermen, tourists, swimmers, divers, and surfers—to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those along north facing exposures as rip currents are life threatening. ***(PR)***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# House overrides governor's veto of land compensation bill

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantibune.com
REPORTER

With a 17-0 vote, the House of Representatives on Friday overrode the governor's veto of a bill authorizing the Department of Public Lands to pay land compensation judgments.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial vetoed House Bill 16-206 on Wednesday, saying it is unconstitutional.

He said there is nowhere in Article XI of the CNMI Constitution that mentions land compensation payments as one of the allowable expenses from moneys received from public lands. DPL's duties are limited to funding itself and the Marianas Public Land Trust, he said.

But the 17 House members who were present at Friday's session disagreed with the governor's reason for vetoing the bill.

Absent during the session were Reps. Rosemond Santos, David Apatang, and Ed Salas.

Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider, co-sponsor of H.B. 16-206, said paying land compensation judgments is one of the "reasonably necessary" expenses for the accomplishment of DPL's functions, also citing Article XI of the CNMI Constitution.

"I think it's proper that the override went through. These are land compensations that have gone to court. And the court has decided that the CNMI owes these people for land taking. It is proper that we, through DPL, become responsible…Everybody enjoys the good road that went through private properties," he said.

Press Secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said the administration is "surprised that the House was not persuaded by the clear and convincing constitutional argument the governor presented in his veto message to the Legislature."

The Fitial administration hopes the Senate will be persuaded by the constitutional argument.

"The governor has sworn to uphold the Constitution and has done so by rejecting the bill. If the Legislature overrides the veto and passes the bill into law, the judicial branch could be asked to review whether the law is constitutional," Reyes added.

DPL has been sued over land compensation payments.

One of the most recent court decisions in connection with land compensation payments is a Jan. 8 ruling by the CNMI Superior Court ordering DPL to pay $1.8 million to the heirs of Rita Rogolifoi as compensation for the family's As Mahetog lands that were used by the government for public projects in 1976 and 1992.

"These people have been overlooked in the last $40 million land compensation and they've gotten frustrated and they took it court. The court said it's the responsibility of the government to pay them. Why they were overlooked in spite of having gone through court is beyond me. Now DPL, because they have the responsibility over land exchanges, for instance, has the same responsibility and liability [to pay]," said Hofschneider.

H.B.16-206, offered by Hofschneider and Stanley T. Torres, authorizes DPL to pay for land compensation judgments using its operations fund bank accounts "in cases where land exchange is not a viable or desirable option."

The bill goes to the Senate for action.

DPL Secretary John S. Del Rosario Jr. earlier wrote a letter to then acting Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez, asking him to veto the bill because it is unconstitutional.

Just like Del Rosario, Fitial cited the Constitution, which states that the Marianas Public Land Corp., now DPL, "shall receive all moneys from the public lands except those from lands in which freehold interest has been transferred to another agency of government and shall transfer these moneys after the end of the fiscal year to the Marianas Public Land Trust except that the corporation shall retain the amount necessary to meet reasonable expenses of administration and management, land surveying, homestead development, and any other expenses reasonably necessary for the accomplishment of its functions."

# Man accused of twice raping neighbor gets 63 days in jail

A man accused of raping a neighbor twice that resulted in serious injury to her rib cage was sentenced to 63 days in jail.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona sentenced Rolando Pascual Mangalinao to one year in prison, all suspended except for 63 days, for assault and battery.

Following a plea agreement, Manglona gave the 35-year-old Mangalinao credit for the 63 days he already served in jail.

Manglona placed the defendant on one year of supervised probation and ordered him to pay a $100 annual probation service fee, $25 court assessment fee, and a $50 fine.

The judge required the defendant to write a letter of apology to the victim of at least 45 words, which must state the illegal acts and apologize for those acts.

Mangalinao is prohibited from possessing or consuming any alcoholic beverage during his probation period.

The defendant and his counsel, assistant public defender Richard Miller, signed a plea agreement with the government represented by chief prosecutor Kevin Lynch.

Mangalinao pleaded guilty to assault and battery in the second amended information. The remaining charges were dismissed as part of the plea bargain.

In July 2008, police arrested Mangalinao on allegations that he raped his neighbor twice at her barracks in Tanapag.

The victim was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center after she complained of severe pain in her rib cage. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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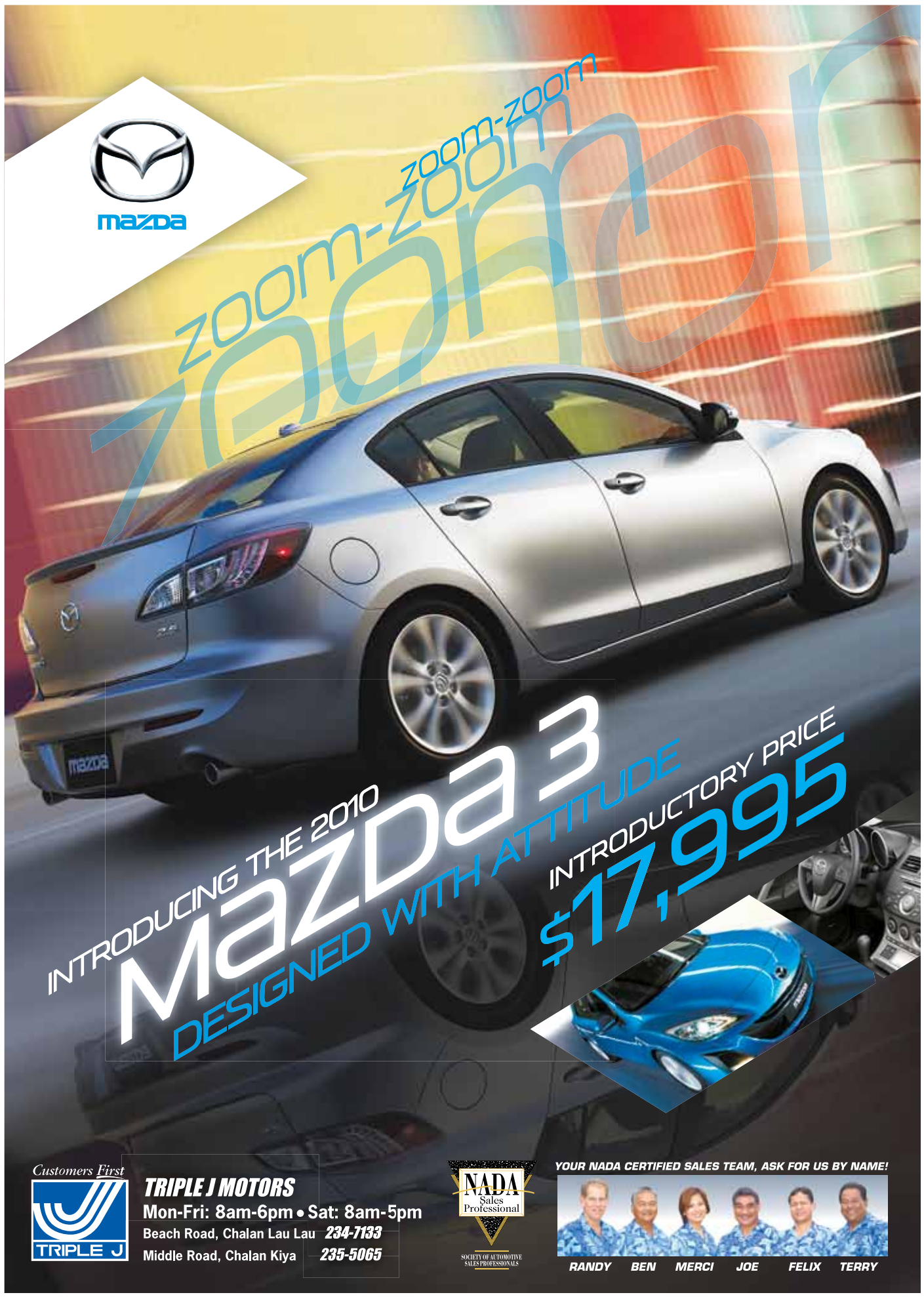

# DOI deploys firefighters to assist Australia with raging wildland fires

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—The Department of the Interior will immediately deploy 29 experienced wildland firefighters to Australia to help battle raging wildfires in Victoria State, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced recentlt. The Department of Agriculture's U.S. Forest Service also is sending about 31 wildland firefighters as part of the United States assistance.

**"**Australia is experiencing an unprecedented wildfire season due to record high temperatures, drought, high wind and low humidity," Secretary Salazar said. **"**We are dispatching this help in response to an official request under our mutual assistance agreement with Australia. They have helped us many times to battle wildfires in the West and we are eager to demonstrate our gratitude and assist them at this critical time."

More than 180 lives have been lost due to the Australian wildfires, which have burned more than a million acres in the past week. Secretary Salazar also extends the Department's condolences for the loss of life.

On Feb. 11, the State Government of Victoria formally requested U.S. assistance, including two 13-member Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation teams; one suppression crew (20 people); three planning chiefs; four operations chiefs; three logistics chiefs; one public information officer; three liaison officers

The wildland firefighters Interior is sending include 18 from the Bureau of Land Management; five from the National Park Service; three from the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and three from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. All are federal employees who will be deployed for up to 35 days. Departures are scheduled to begin today. Australia will reimburse the United States for all expenses, including salaries. ***(PR)***

## AIR FORCE

*From Page 1*

Command in Langley, Virginia. The stabilizer trim is used in conjunction with the aircraft's elevator to control the pitch of the aircraft.

The unarmed bomber was on a training mission that included a flyby in support of the Guam Liberation Day celebration when it crashed in July off Guam, a U.S. territory located 3,700 miles southwest of Hawaii. All six crew members on board were killed.

The report said the reason why the stabilizer trim was improperly set could not be determined because there were no survivors or emergency radio calls from the plane. Only a minimal amount of aircraft control systems or instruments were recovered.

The investigation also determined that the combination of a low altitude and a descending left turn, and the crew recognizing too late the severity of the situation, contributed to the crash.

But the board said any experienced crew could have found it difficult to recognize, assess and recover from the rapidly developing situation involving the stabilizer trim setting.

he B-52 was assigned to the 20th Bomb Squadron at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana.

## SENATE

*From Page 2*

all of four strategies for compliance with the achievable mandates of energy conservation, including having personnel pass the test for LEED accreditation.

The course may be taken online. Online seminars cost $25. Courses taken on the mainland cost about $200, while study documentation can be downloaded online for $200.

DPW may also consult the online LEED Credit Interpretation Rulings which would require joining the U.S. Green Building Council for $500. All other fees will then be reduced by 10 to 20 percent for members.

The department may also hire a LEED-accredited professional to work with DPW's Technical Services Division in designing the project which will cost $3,000 to $10,000, depending on the scope of work.

DPW may also apply for LEED certification of the building which costs about $2,100 for registration and certification, plus TSD staff time. A consultant for records management would cost from $1,000 to $5,000.

The bill said the Legislature is still in strong support of building sustainable structures, but that DPW needs time to certify its personnel or to find additional funding to hire a LEED-accredited professional.

"In the short term, the suspension of this provision will allow ongoing projects to proceed accordingly," the bill adds.

**64th BIRTHDAY**

Happy 64th birthday go out to Grandma Josephina "Fina Dagu" P. Tenorio. Wishing you many more years to come. "May the good Lord continue to bless you! I love you and miss you so much," from granddaughter LiaGirl in Texas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## VOLUNTARY

*From Page 1*

It is made part of the standalone austerity bill introduced by Rep. Victor B. Hocog because the proposed unpaid legal holidays and austerity Fridays do not apply to the Constitutionally protected salaries of the governor, lieutenant governor, members of the Legislature, justices and judges.

Hocog introduced House Bill 16-223 on Friday afternoon, just a few minutes after the House held off voting on the override of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's veto of the budget bill.

Fitial vetoed on Tuesday the $156.76 million budget bill submitted by the Legislature for Fiscal Year 2009, which includes $148 million in local revenue collections, due to lack of austerity measures.

The administration thus sponsored a standalone austerity bill reinstating austerity Fridays by closing government offices on 12 Fridays until the end of FY 2009, hoping to save over $4 million in public funds.

But House members, during Friday's session, said the original austerity Fridays and unpaid legal holidays did not save as much money as expected. Instead, House members want stricter hiring controls. They accuse the Fitial administration of hiring over 400 new employees despite the financial troubles of the government.

H.B. 16-223 applies the austerity Fridays to the following dates: Feb. 27, March 6 and 20, April 17, May 1 and 15, June 12, July 10 and 24, Aug. 7 and 21, and Sept. 18, 2009.

The measure also suspends five paid legal holidays: March 24 (Commonwealth Covenant Day), April 10 (God Friday), May 25 (Memorial Day), July 3 (Liberation Day-July 4), and Sept. 7 (Labor Day).

They apply to all civil service and excepted service employees of the government, with or without contracts, including those in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government, as well as in autonomous agencies and municipal entities.

For each austerity Friday or unpaid legal holiday, hourly and salaried employees' pay shall be reduced by eight hours.

There are some 4,000 government employees, including those at PSS and NMC. The Executive Branch alone has 1,800 to 1,900 employees.

H.B. 16-223 says all employment contracts entered into by the government shall contain a provision stating that the terms of such contract shall be superseded by any legislation enacted to reduce government payroll obligations by way of work hour reduction, government shutdown, furlough, or other measures adopted for the express purpose of fiscal austerity.

### Exemptions

Exempted from the austerity Fridays and unpaid legal holidays are fully federal funded employees and department, agency or division of the local government.

The bill says the Public School System commissioner and Northern Marianas College president may exempt employees from the austerity Fridays and unpaid legal holidays, but all exemptions granted shall be transmitted to the Legislature.

Austerity Fridays scheduled by the PSS commissioner and NMC president shall occur on days when students are not in attendance, the bill adds.

Attorneys of all branches of government shall also be exempted, provided they report to work and record of their attendance is maintained.

### Reprogramming authority

H.B. 16-223 grants reprogramming power to expenditure authorities with respect to all budget activities, to ensure the delivery of public services.

It grants the governor unlimited authority to reprogram funding lapses realized from all budget activities, except the legislative and judicial branches, during the fiscal year to cover budget shortfalls, as he deems fiscally prudent and in the best interest of the public.

It also authorizes the governor to transfer qualified, operational expenses to the appropriate accounts which are unencumbered, including up to $3.5 million to be charged for operational expenses of the Department of Public Health to supplement its budget for operations.

They also include up to $823,500 which may be used to pay the NMI Retirement Fund to liquidate deficient employer contributions (excluding penalties) for employees who elected to retire prior to, and including, FY 2009.

Also included for reprogramming is up to $63,000 which may be used to cover the shortfall in the funding of the governors and lieutenant governors' special retirement annuities from FYs 2006 through 2008, and up to $113,500 to be used to pay additional runoff claims to Aetna Global under the third party agreement with the Government Health and Life Insurance.

### Earmarking suspension

The nine-page bill also suspends earmarking of funds for certain programs for FY 2009.

To be suspended are the foreign national worker fund fees to NMC and PSS, and 10 percent of gaming jackpot tax to PSS.

Also to be suspended is the earmarking of 10 percent of general fund poker fees to the Human Resources Development Fund or the Workforce Investment Agency, and 50 percent to the Retirement Fund.

The austerity bill also suspends earmarking 70 percent of the hotel tax and 25 percent of the alcoholic beverage container tax to the Marianas Visitors Authority, and 30 percent of the hotel tax and 20 percent of the alcoholic beverage container tax to the NMI Retirement Fund.

## NMI

*From Page 1*

"And the CNMI government will have to do so quickly. Because this money is meant to stimulate immediate economic activity…there are 'use it or lose it' provisions throughout the bill," Sablan said in a statement.

Press Secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. yesterday said Gov. Benigno R. Fitial agrees with Sablan on the use of the new federal funds and appreciates his support.

"The administration is committed to making full use of available federal funds for the CNMI's maximum benefit," said Reyes.

He added that Fitial instructed executive branch departments during the last Cabinet meeting to quickly comply with federal fund requirements.

President Obama hopes the $787 billion recovery package will help boost an economy in freefall with a combination of government spending and tax cuts and credits. ***(See related story on page 14)***

Spending in the package includes about $120 billion for infrastructure, more than $100 billion for education and $30 billion on energy-related projects. More than $212 billion goes to tax breaks for individuals and businesses. Most individuals will get a $400 tax credit, and couples will get $800. Another $267 billion goes to direct spending like food stamps and unemployment benefits.

### 'Help when we need it most'

Sablan said the money that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will make available to the CNMI is in addition to the tens of millions of dollars that it is already receiving from the federal government on an annual basis.

"It is intended to help our economy at this time when we need help the most…So I urge the governor and Commonwealth officials to make full use of these funds in a way that will make the most impact and help get our people and islands out of the economic doldrums," he said.

He said the bill has money for school modernization, for government operations, for highways, water and sewer systems, as well as help those in need with food assistance, to train workers for new jobs, and to weatherize homes to help people cut back on power expenses.

### Education

Sablan said he is particularly pleased that the stimulus package focuses strongly on education, with $8.8 million going to PSS through existing programs.

"The education of our children is the best investment we can make in the CNMI's future. I am pleased that Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Education and Labor Committee chairman George Miller were successful in ensuring that the bulk of the money available to the CNMI is targeted at education," said Sablan.

In addition, a pool of $219.2 million will be available to the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands on a need basis. The secretary of Education in consultation with the secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, will make the distribution.

Sablan said the new money is intended to restore school funding levels that have been cut over the last several years. The money can also be used to repair existing school facilities and to make them ore energy efficient to cut down on the cost of utilities.

"All of this additional funding is really just a first step to ensuring that our children catch up, and keep pace, with the rest of the world," said Sablan.

Sablan said he has been in constant communication with CNMI school administrators and the Board of Education about the needs of schools. Now that he is a member of the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor, he said he will be able to do much more to help teachers and students.

Another large pool of $48.8 million will be available to the four insular areas for police and other public services, including higher education. These funds will also be distributed on a need basis on grant applications submitted by the governor.

It is not clear yet, however, whether CNMI individuals will also be getting tax credits and other benefits. In the U.S., most individuals affected will get a $400 tax credit, and most couples will get an $800 credit.

According to national media reports, that amounts to an extra $13 a week in a person's paycheck, starting in June. That's less than what Obama campaigned on: $500 for individuals and $1,000 per couple.

Many students will get a $2,500 tuition tax credit. First-time home buyers may qualify for a tax credit of up to $8,000. Moreover, people who receive Social Security will get a one-time payment of $250.

# Laolao Bay donates to DYS, Sta. Soledad

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Laolao Bay Golf Resort donated cash and several items to two community based entities during simple ceremonies Friday at its facility in Kagman.

Laolao Bay president Yun Kim and vice president and general manager Tetsuya Matsunaga personally turned over a $500 donation to Fr. Manny Corcuera of the Santa Soledad Parish Church and members of the parish council.

The parish council is currently raising funds for its fiesta in April. Part of the funds would be used for raffle prizes.

Kim and Matsunaga also personally turned over several items, including hats, T-shirts, and belts to the members of the organizing committee for the Division of Youth Services Parent Leadership Summit.

February is Parent Leadership Month with several activities lined up, including a workshop last weekend at the Chacha Ocean View Middle in Kagman.

"The donated items will be turned over to the Karidat Social Services Network for distribution to the needy people," said Marylou Ada of Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

"We thank the management of the resort, especially Mr. Yun Kim, for these donations," said Felicidad Ogumoro, coordinator for Parent Education Committee and the overall chairman of the Parent Leadership committee.

Others who were present during the turnover were Polly Omecheleng of NMC-CREES and head of the exhibit committee for the youth summit; Dyan Camacho, head of the solicitation committee; and Thelma Torres, head of the Family Day Fun.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Laolao Bay Golf Resort President Yun Kim turns over a $500 donation to Fr. Manny Corcuera of Santa Soldedad Parish Church for the upcoming fiesta in April. Looking on are members of the parish council.

# Ex-convict who likes to assault people when hungry ordered to leave CNMI

An ex-convict who was accused of attacking a minor girl with a broken bottle because he was hungry was given a jail sentence of 11 months and seven days.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona sentenced 29-year-old Jerry Derson Ramon to one year in prison, all suspended except for 11 months and seven days, for the lesser-included offense of assault and battery.

Manglona gave Ramon credit for the time he already served in jail.

Accordingly, the judge ordered the immediate release of the defendant from the Department of Corrections' custody.

Manglona said Ramon shall depart from the CNMI at his own expense within three months of the entry of his plea agreement.

She said the defendant is prohibited from re-entering the CNMI for three years.

Ramon, a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia, was placed on three years of supervised probation and required to pay a $25 court assessment fee.

While in the CNMI, the defendant is not allowed to possess nor consume any alcoholic beverage.

Ramon and counsel, assistant public defender Douglas Hartig, entered a plea agreement. The defendant pleaded guilty.

The plea agreement stated that on Jan. 20, 2008, the defendant assaulted the then 17-year-old girl.

Police said Ramon approached the girl at the beachside and swung a broken soju bottle at her.

The girl blocked it with her hands, injuring her right palm. She screamed for help, prompting the defendant to run away.

Ramon entered a poker arcade, but the security guard asked him to leave because of previous incidents of harassing customers.

Responding police officers arrived and subsequently placed the defendant under arrest.

Ramon admitted attacking the girl apparently because he was hungry and wanted to be arrested.

Police said the defendant was arrested before for the same offense—creating problems when starving so he would get arrested.

In March 2006, Ramon was given a 132-day prison term for stealing a case of beer and four bottles of liquor from Pacific Gardenia's Sunset Bar and Grill in Chalan Kanoa.

Ramon was arrested many times for burglary and theft cases. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**
**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**
Second Floor Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950

# PUBLIC NOTICE
## OVERSTAYERS REPORT
### Monday, February 9, 2009, first publication
### Monday, February 16, 2009, second publication

Notice is hereby given that, according to the records maintained by the Commonwealth as of January 28, 2009, the following persons have overstayed the permission granted upon their entry to the Commonwealth for employment purposes. Persons in an overstayer status are required to depart the Commonwealth immediately. Persons who depart the Commonwealth voluntarily are eligible to return; those who are deported are not eligible to return.

Permissions granted upon entry may have been extended or the entry status may be changed under a number of different provisions of the Commonwealth law, but all extensions and changes must be documented and the applicable fees paid. If the necessary applications and supporting document have not been correctly completed, filed, or recorded, a name may appear in overstayer status although an extension may have been granted upon completion or recording of the necessary documentation.

If your name is on the list set out below and you have or should have a current status allowing you to be in the Commonwealth, please report to Evelyn Sablan, Executive Secretary to the Director of Labor, second floor, Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, Saipan, no later than February 23, 2009, to correct the records.

| Name | LIDS No. |
|---|---|
| *****, SHAHID | 162889 |
| ABALOS, VERONICA RULLODA | 285888 |
| ACABAL, VIVIAN H | 120639 |
| AGBAYANI, REYNALYN S | 137703 |
| AGUIRRE, EVELYN N | 103941 |
| AHN, SOO JI | 159648 |
| ALAVA, AMELIA SAYNO | 170696 |
| ALBANO, CECILIA JAVIER | 105373 |
| ANDAYA, DANIELI | 104910 |
| ANTONIO, MARINELL ALGAMON | 310934 |
| ARNALDO, AURORA | 103934 |
| AZIZ, MD | 153675 |
| BALASUBRAMANIAM, RASIAH P | 150275 |
| BALBIN, CONSTANTINO P | 139920 |
| BALLESTEROS, PETRONILO RETUYAN | 293078 |
| BAPTISTA, LETICIA V | 139556 |
| BATALLONES, SHIRLEY | 105926 |
| BAUTISTA, BERNABE | 146315 |
| BIAN, XIAOFENG | 193423 |
| BRILLANTES, ESTELA BAUTISTA | 127911 |
| BUENVIAJE, ROLANDO B | 118709 |
| BUNDOC, WALTER P | 129032 |
| BUNPANYA, ANCHANAPORN | 110724 |
| BUSTILLOS, DANILO ANCHETA | 312068 |
| CABILES, EDUARDO SOBREMONTE | 143372 |
| CABUGNASON, RODOLFO R | 150706 |
| CACHO, TERESITA E | 126133 |
| CADAG, MA GEMMA DIZON | 133446 |
| CAMACHO, JOKER GROSPE | 173631 |
| CAMPOLLO, HERMINIA | 128725 |
| CASTILLO, LEONDIA F | 124938 |
| CAYLAN, LYDIA M | 128143 |
| CENTENO, LYNN BUGARIN | 129742 |
| CHEN, JUN | 282517 |
| CHEN, MEIHONG | 291073 |
| CHEN, WEIZHU | 144092 |
| CHEN, XURONG | 311585 |
| CHEN, YAFANG | 144096 |
| CHEN, YAN JUN | 155045 |
| CHENG, HONGYING | 162833 |
| CHO, IL KYUN | 200888 |
| CISNERO, JACQUELINE MANUEL | 286541 |
| COLCOL, LOLITA N | 125803 |
| CORDERO, PEVIMA B | 183865 |
| CORILLA, GAUDENCIA | 112532 |
| CRUZ, MARY GRACE ISLA | 134841 |
| CUI, HU | 286765 |
| CULANGGO, LUCIA INOCIAN | 313413 |
| DAVID, REYNALDO S | 112437 |
| DELA CRUZ, JESUS EUGENIO | 105825 |
| DELA CRUZ, RANDY R | 120692 |
| DELOS SANTOS, YOLANDA D | 123949 |
| DIG, RAMIR D | 118887 |
| DIGMAYO, LOURDES ANTONIO | 299965 |
| DINOPOL, MERLY CORREOS | 127308 |
| DIONORA, DORINA B | 110486 |
| DIZON, ELMER A | 160755 |
| DLC CORDERO, GERALDINE C. | 116949 |
| DOMAOAL, JOCELYN DLC | 123948 |
| DONA, TITO ABUAN | 286522 |
| DONG, HUNA | 122420 |
| DU, HONGYAN | 196436 |
| DUANGJANDAENG, WILAIPORN | 174808 |
| DUATIN, GREGORIO B | 148268 |
| DUMALE, JULIETA VIRAY | 300578 |
| ESPARTERO, FAYE MONETTE PEREZ | 205065 |
| ESPIRIDION, EDITHA C | 200154 |
| EZURE, MASAYUKI | 294179 |
| FACTOR, LEO DELA CRUZ | 203169 |
| FANG, HUI | 282560 |
| FASONILAO, MARITES BAGUNA | 203685 |
| FENG, QUANXIA | 201626 |
| FENG, YANHUAN | 157409 |
| FEROLINO, VILMA T | 160159 |
| FIGUEROA, EDUARDO M | 104637 |
| FLORENTINO JR, AUGUSTO C | 128743 |
| FLORES, DOMINADOR JR MEJIA | 311481 |
| FLORES, RICARDO JUNTILLA | 172189 |
| FUENTES, EVELYN C | 135079 |
| FULE JR, BENJAMIN GINO | 294440 |
| GALGO, EMIE H. | 106889 |
| GALUTERA, MARGIE DELEON | 170765 |
| GASPAR, RIZALINO JR I | 157349 |
| GENEZ, ELIZABETH A | 149993 |
| GILERA, ARTHUR JUSI | 122172 |
| GONZAGA, DIANA DOYOLA | 294453 |
| GOZUN, VIRGILIO F | 126154 |
| GU, GUO HUA | 146042 |
| GU, ZHENG HUI | 197724 |
| GUAN, YAN WEI | 163968 |
| GUIANG, FLORENDA B | 130394 |
| GUILALAS, JOEL B | 195200 |
| GUMAPAS, VICENTE A | 126667 |
| GUO, GUANGFU | 295075 |
| GUO, GUOFENG | 149109 |
| HAFALLA, CLAIRE GADIA | 293605 |
| HAN, YINSHU | 191577 |
| HARADA, KENJI | 182778 |
| HE, JIANDONG | 311801 |
| HE, LIQING | 301104 |
| HE, XIU JUN | 204194 |
| HERNANDEZ, OFELIA M | 105113 |
| HOQUE, FOZLUL | 164188 |
| HU, PING | 174325 |
| HU, QUNXING | 166227 |
| HUANG, JI HONG | 166930 |
| HUANG, LIAN JIN | 181936 |
| HUANG, MEIZI | 294298 |
| HUANG, PINGFEN | 192079 |
| HUANG, XIAO LAN | 166200 |
| IGNACIO, JIMMY ANDRES | 283843 |
| ISLAM, MD SIRAJUL | 131716 |
| JI, YONGLI | 181044 |
| JIANG, QINLIAN | 294499 |
| JIANG, XUEPING | 191882 |
| JIN, SHU | 162289 |
| JIN, YUNLONG | 162047 |
| JUANTAKHOB, KANNIKA | 165851 |
| KANAGASABAI, RASALINGAM | 127765 |
| KWON, TAEYWON | 311797 |
| LACSON, ROSALIE ISIP | 283256 |
| LAGARTOS, MARILYN AUTOR | 205571 |
| LAI, DONGGUI | 122318 |
| LAOSON, KITTI | 170063 |
| LASANTHIAH, NITAYA | 163940 |
| LI, FU | 287954 |
| LI, GENWANG | 195792 |
| LI, HUI | 175102 |
| LI, HUIQIN | 203890 |
| LI, JULIN | 284087 |
| LI, MEIHUA | 202608 |
| LI, WANG FANG | 203761 |
| LI, WEI | 311727 |
| LI, YANXIA | 190669 |
| LI, YONGJUN | 194705 |
| LI, YUANFU | 163458 |
| LI, ZHI CHENG | 204788 |
| LIANG, FANG MING | 158623 |
| LIANG, XIU YUAN | 135156 |
| LIN, YABO | 139724 |
| LIN, YUNHUI | 300161 |
| LITUSQUEN, NERCITA SIAROT | 126783 |
| LIU, SHU JING | 165054 |
| LIU, XIA | 182190 |
| LORICA, MA TERESITA RANILI | 202499 |
| LU, JIAN PING | 102120 |
| LUAT, ARMANDO GILE | 299246 |

| Name | LIDS No. |
|---|---|
| LUO, YIXIN | 183401 |
| MAGAYAGA, EMELITA A | 122936 |
| MAKILAN, RAMELO V | 116772 |
| MALIWANAG, GERALDO AVERILLA | 189965 |
| MALLILLIN, MARIVIC E | 137328 |
| MARQUEZ, ELIZABETH V | 148581 |
| MARTIN, FEDERICO PACADA | 201388 |
| MAURICIO, TERESITA F | 115848 |
| MEI, SHUHUA | 189898 |
| MENDIOLA, EVER T | 141760 |
| MIGUEL, RUFINO P | 166684 |
| MOHAMMAD, REZZAK | 175276 |
| MOISES JR, ERNESTO TASIC | 204768 |
| MUNOZ, ELENO P | 143059 |
| NAMBUNLA, NUTCHANAT | 111139 |
| NARDO, ELIZABETH B | 157027 |
| NAULGAN, DOMING P | 161962 |
| NAVARRO, MAR CABANTAC | 286269 |
| NOBLE, ROWENA | 120655 |
| ONGA, ALICIA M | 154162 |
| ORTIZ, REYNALDO BANASCA | 310451 |
| PACLETA, SONIA P | 106900 |
| PAGDILAO, CLARITA A | 152708 |
| PARULI, ANGELO M | 107750 |
| PHIAMALANG, KESARAPORN | 190088 |
| PHOSAI, ATTHAPHON | 182133 |
| PITOGO, MARCIAL | 154146 |
| PORIO, JENIFER STA. ANA | 312609 |
| PULIDO, MARILOU | 128752 |
| PUNO, ARNULFO S | 105291 |
| QIU, DECHENG | 301070 |
| QUINITIP, ROMMEL UBUNGEN | 290588 |
| QUINTELA, ROSIELYN J | 156750 |
| RAENGKHRUT, KAWINTHIP | 288773 |
| RAO, YI | 203428 |
| RIVERA, CHARLIE ALAYAN | 300952 |
| ROBINSON, ERIC MCKENZIE | 198021 |
| SABALDICA, LUDIMER CASTRO | 299868 |
| SAE-TIA, NATNICHA | 106301 |
| SAKAMOTO, TOMOKO | 299988 |
| SANTILLAN, MELINDA T | 106902 |
| SANTOS, ROBERTO T | 110588 |
| SAPO, ASUNCION | 122937 |
| SATO, HIROSHI | 126376 |
| SENO, ANITA LINDA GONATO | 172195 |
| SHEN, CHUNYUAN | 300163 |
| SHEN, FUZI | 298377 |
| SHEN, XING GUO | 164598 |
| SHENG, YINJUAN | 181819 |
| SHI, HONGLI | 286297 |
| SHIN, KYUNG JA CHUNG | 190385 |
| SHU, HUIYAN | 285416 |
| SI, WEI PING | 164019 |
| SIM, DONG-SUB | 191175 |
| SIMBULAN, CLEMENTE A | 194860 |
| SINGSON, ROSALIE MAYONGUE | 204602 |
| SOMWONG, SUPRANEE | 139661 |
| SONG, GUOPING | 297672 |
| SONG, XIAOMING | 311485 |
| SORIANO, EDWIN CABACAB | 291730 |
| SORNWICHAI, KITTIMA | 175656 |
| SOTO, BERNADETTE LEDESMA | 202770 |
| SRIWONGSA, RATTANA | 165942 |
| SU, MEI | 280268 |
| SUICO, CELESTINO T | 127647 |
| SUISENA, RUNGRUDEE | 165930 |
| SUKSAENG, SONKLIN | 165847 |
| SUTTHISOMBUT, VICHAI | 170050 |
| SYCHEVA, ELENA | 312881 |
| TABAYOYONG, MODESTO ACOSTA | 204866 |
| TANG, MING | 191833 |
| TANG, YUEXIN | 172599 |
| TANI, KAORI | 190171 |
| THABTHIMHIN, ARTHIT | 105146 |
| TU, XIANGLIANG | 295293 |
| TUAZON, PERLITA A | 112511 |
| TUMENJARGAL, BAYARTSETSEG | 312691 |
| TUNIN, PHANOM | 176413 |
| UDOMPORN, SUMALEE | 102409 |
| UMALIN, ISABEL ARAGON | 203707 |
| UTHAIWAN, KANYA | 165944 |
| VERGARA, FLORANTE I | 144687 |
| VINOYA, ROLANDO N | 151620 |
| WADA, SATOSHI | 295261 |
| WANG, CHANGXIU | 198066 |
| WANG, HUI | 303120 |
| WANG, JING | 280454 |
| WANG, LIZHEN | 158955 |
| WANG, QI | 152909 |
| WANG, QIN | 194444 |
| WANG, TONGHUA | 148352 |
| WANG, WEN JUAN | 184393 |
| WANG, XIANGLI | 300991 |
| WANG, YUEZHEN | 296597 |
| WANPHAKDI, SUNTHON | 188164 |
| WIANGNON, ORATHAI | 188261 |
| WIYAROT, RUANG | 166088 |
| WU, JIAOQING | 284098 |
| WU, YAN | 203841 |
| WU, YILU | 153416 |
| WU, YONGSHUANG | 296383 |
| WU, YUE E | 159699 |
| WU, ZHENYU | 148950 |
| XIA, ZISHUANG | 203842 |
| XIAO, YANBANG | 155050 |
| XIE, GUOHUI | 293608 |
| XU, CHENG MING | 284497 |
| XU, HONG HUI | 166997 |
| XU, HONGFANG | 291063 |
| XU, HONGYU | 286336 |
| XU, HUILI | 161260 |
| XU, QILUN | 153405 |
| XU, XIANWANG | 146511 |
| XU, XIN | 284240 |
| XU, YINHUA | 295266 |
| XUAN, HAOZHE | 199649 |
| XUE, HUIYUN | 300656 |
| XUE, XIUQING | 120035 |
| YANG, HONG JIU | 282942 |
| YE, HUAYING | 130280 |
| YIN, YUHUA | 280462 |
| YU, WEIHONG | 183308 |
| YUAN, YUN | 312128 |
| YUE, LIYAN | 282651 |
| ZHAN, YANLING | 293741 |
| ZHANG, FANZHU | 121042 |
| ZHANG, HUIMIN | 294163 |
| ZHANG, MIN | 311375 |
| ZHANG, XIUFANG | 287948 |
| ZHANG, YARU | 282179 |
| ZHAO, CHEN XIN | 153422 |
| ZHAO, LIANRONG | 145719 |
| ZHAO, LIYAN | 155117 |
| ZHAO, REN HONG | 158624 |
| ZHAO, SHUQING | 145803 |
| ZHAO, XUEYING | 159558 |
| ZHEN, HAIXIA | 173739 |
| ZHENG, LIWEN | 293607 |
| ZHI, HUI | 298025 |
| ZHIQIANG, JING | 155136 |
| ZHONG, GUOQIANG | 160668 |
| ZHOU, ANMIN | 280525 |
| ZHOU, JIWEI | 180649 |
| ZHU, BAIHUA | 201498 |
| ZHUANG, HONGHONG | 300753 |
| ZINAMIDER, BAIGALMAA | 312689 |

# Juan Pan confident he will NMI's next governor
## Fund board cites Republican Party's internal fighting

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Businessman and current Retirement Fund board chairman Juan "Pan" T. Guerrero said he is confident he will be the next governor.

Guerrero

"I'm running as an independent. It's moving forward smoothly. A lot of people are coming on board. My campaign is going strongly. I'm positive that I will win this election," Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* on Friday.

Guerrero, who is a former lawmaker, said he believes that people in the CNMI are looking for a new face—somebody from the business community rather than those that have been serving in political capacity in the last few years or years back.

With respect to his running mate, he said he has a short list, but that he will announce it very soon.

Guerrero said his running mate should have the same commitment that will compliment him as governor in terms of ideas and platforms.

"We are tying to change the system. We need to ensure we treat people equally, and we will try to improve the quality of life in the Commonwealth," he said.

He said he wants to see first the other candidates' line up because coming up with a decision as to his lieutenant governor.

"I think the other candidates are instrumental in my decision. It's a strategy. I need to make sure that whoever is running, my running mate will be stronger than them," Guerrero said.

He said he wants to see first what will happen to the internal fighting within the Republican Party.

"It's nothing new that the Babauta team (former Gov. Juan Babauta) and the Heinz team (Rep. Heinz Hofschneider)… they look at each other. They are not the best of friends," Guerrero said.

Babauta had already expressed his intention to run for governor in November. There are talks that Hofschneider may also run as governor.

The other individuals who already announced to run as chief executive are Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, former Lt. Gov. Diego Benavente, and former Sen. Ramon "Kumoi" Guerrero.

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**
**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**
**DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING**
Second Floor Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone no. (670) 236-0956/0957 Facsimile no. (670) 236-0995

# NOTICE OF HEARINGS
## PENDING DENIAL APPEALS
### Monday, February 09, 2009 first notice
### Monday, February 16, 2009 second notice

ALL PERSONS OR PARTIES LISTED BELOW ARE INSTRUCTED TO APPEAR AT THE HEARING OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, SECOND FLOOR, AFETNA SQUARE BUILDING, SAN ANTONIO, ON THE DATE AND AT THE TIME LISTED BELOW. PLEASE BRING ANY DOCUMENTATION NECESSARY TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES THAT LED TO THE DENIAL OF YOUR PERMIT APPLICATION. IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR OR FAIL TO BRING REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION, THE APPEAL MAY BE DISMISSED AND AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU. ANY EMPLOYEE WHO INTENDS TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO TRANSFER TO A NEW EMPLOYER MUST APPEAR AT THE HEARING TO MAKE THAT REQUEST; FAILURE TO APPEAR MAY RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DENIAL OF TRANSFER RELIEF.

Any employer whose denial arose from a failure to submit documentation, and whose documentation is now complete, may report to the Director of Labor and have the denial cleared. Any employer whose denial has been cleared does not need to appear at the Hearing.

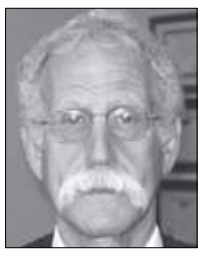
| DC No. | Employer | Employee | Date & Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| DC 08-644 | Ablog, Nestor | Esguerra, Cheryl | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-666 | Ablog, Nestor | Estebanm, Noel | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-645 | Ablog, Nestor | Marquez, Johanna | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-647 | Ablog, Nestor | Mendoza, Joelan | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-649 | Ablog, Nestor | Reyes, Efren | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-667 | Ablog, Nestor | Valino, Rustico | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-648 | Ablog, Nestor | Vergel De Dios, Martin | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-646 | Ablog, Nestor | Villarin, Edcar | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-110 | Ada, Rosalinda | Farro, Ferdinand | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-111 | Ada, Rosalinda | Farro, Rocelia | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-995 | Alpex Saipan Inc. | Padayao, Veronica | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-994 | Alpex Saipan Inc. | Sagarino, Nicasio | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-493 | Big Bell Inc. | Jin, Yufen | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-015 | Bisnes Mami Inc. | Lucero, Arlo G. | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-280 | Bisnes Mami Inc. | Samar, Blasito | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-086 | Brundidge, Willie L. | Tajan, Romeo | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-396 | Cabrera, Rosalie | Demegillo, Ruther | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-779 | Camacho, Anita | Hibi, Marcianita | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-841 | Camacho, Barbara Jean | Biteranta, Analee | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-1123 | Castro, Augustin | Chen, Huaping | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-088 | Fei Ma Industrial Co Ltd. | Dong, Xu Kun | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-600 | Geng Biao Corp. | Cui, Shun Yu | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-865 | Gintian Corporation | He, Jinlian | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-581 | Graphics Inc. | Novillas, Ernesto | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-1134 | H Deveplopment LLC | Staffler, Enrico | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-1031 | Han Nam Corporation | Paek, Mi Ae | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-993 | Hotel Riviera Saipan Inc. | Japitana, Carmen M. | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-821 | In Deok Lee | Habijuddin, Raquel | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-288 | J Lucky Corporation | Quinata, Juan Han | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-263 | JCJ Co, Ltd. | Li, Donghua | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-314 | Kangshun Corp. | Huang, Ying | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-1140 | L&Y Corporation | Ligaya, Antonio | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-1141 | L&Y Corporation | Padayao, Antonio Jr. C. | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 07-439 | Lai's American Corporation | Yang, Yigen | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-520 | Man Bao Corporation | Zhao, Yuanrong | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-961 | Marquez, Geraldine | Seman, Jesse/Tricia | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-345 | Mirano, Earl | Corpuz, Russel R. | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-1027 | My Way Corporation | Jin, Xuehua | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-067 | Naina Enterprises Inc. | Kumar, Amit | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-414 | Naron, Venus | Dang, Hong Ha Thi | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-415 | Naron, Venus | Martinez, Teresita | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-758 | Noah Saipan Inc. | Miranda, Pilar | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-761 | Pacific Sun Lines Inc. | Cui, Qing Yu | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-906 | Palm Springs Life Ext. Inc. | Sun, Ronglan | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-1139 | Philpan Int'l Corporation | Ali, Md Uesub | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-1018 | Power Corporation | Kim, Kwon Nam | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-158 | Roberto, Juan B. | Entendez, Romeo | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-656 | Sablan, Deverly Davina | Caintoy, Raquel | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-103 | San Nicolas, Rebecca | Divina, Ronaldo | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-970 | Soo Min Corporation | Park, Eun Jeong Kim | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-601 | Teregeyo, Marianne | Santiago, Ricardo | 2/24/09 AT 9AM |
| DC 08-471 | World Int'l Corp. | Flores, Jeffrey | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-352 | Yong He Pacific Corp. | Tang, Xin Mei | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |
| DC 08-292 | Yong Sang Pacific Corp. | Im, Inah | 2/24/09 AT 1PM |

# Judge: Fund issue a Commonwealth problem

## Govendo cites importance to get Legislature involved

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo last Friday underscored the importance of finally resolving the Retirement Fund's lawsuit over the government's failure to remit the required employer contributions.


Govendo

At a status conference, Govendo suggested to the parties in the case to get the Legislature, who has the control of government funding, involved in the discussion.

"It would be negligent for us if we keep continuing this!" said the judge as he granted Fund's counsel Viola Alepuyo's request to conduct two separate hearings.

The sole issue remaining in the case is to determine the amount of damages owed the Fund.

Govendo set phase one of the hearing for April 20, and phase two for June 8.

The judge said he is hoping that the Legislature will get involved because there are so many people affected by the issue and that this is an election year.

He compared the Fund to a savings account that is not earning an interest, but people are withdrawing their money.

"Eventually it becomes zero! That's the issue!" Govendo said.

He said this is a major issue affecting almost 3,000 people in the CNMI.

"This is a Commonwealth issue. It's a Commonwealth problem," Govendo said.

Alepuyo said they asked for the April hearing so they could show the actual damages owed the Fund.

Alepuyo said that, in the June hearing, they could bring in experts to show just how much the Fund has lost because of the unpaid contributions and the loss of possible investments.

She agreed with Govendo that the Legislature should be brought in and be part of the discussion process.

"The problem really is, if you think about the hundreds of millions of dollars that is involved, it's overwhelming! But I think that if you cut it down into several different parts and address that individually and separately, then once you able to resolve one issue and move on to the next one, then you can overcome it," the lawyer told the media.

Assistant Attorney General Anthony Welch, counsel for the government, also agreed that without the Legislature's participation, there is no practical solution to the issue.

Welch told the court that the government should be given enough time to address the issue.

"This is not a simple case!" Welch stressed.

Fund Board chair Juan T. Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* after the hearing that he is happy that the judge set some dates and that even the government is pushing to resolve the issue.

"We believe those dates are very instrumental for further discovery and also for presentation. We are hopeful that the Legislature will get involved because it is clear that we would also need the Legislature to address some funding issues, especially when the awards are presented and approved by the court," Guerrero said.

The Fund filed the lawsuit against the government, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Department of Finance, and Finance Secretary Eloy Inos in 2006 over the government's failure to remit required payments.

In November 2008, Govendo granted the Fund's request for default judgment after the government, through the Attorney General's Office, waited nearly two years to answer the complaint.

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# Nearly $1M still available from developer's tax appropriations

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Expenditure authorities for 16 active projects on Saipan are urged to make a move on their proposed undertakings after the Department of Finance released that there are $901,117 under the developer's tax appropriations that remain untapped.

As of Dec. 31, 2008, it was disclosed that from the total appropriation of $1.1 million since the 14th Legislature, only $204,502 has actually been used for the following projects:

- $137,893 for a road paving in Precinct I approved by Saipan Local Delegation in 14th Legislature;
- $30,793 for a road repair/ FEMA match for Precinct IV;
- $25,107 for a road repair projects in Precinct I; and
- $10,000 for repair of a Koblerville Elementary School classroom.

Currently waiting processing of contracts are the Kagman school walkways which $296,445 was approved by the 15th Legislature.

Other school projects that are in line with the developer's tax appropriation include:

- $86,000 for Kagman and Koblerville elementary schools' parking lot paving;
- $51,620 for San Vicente kindergarten classroom;
- $ 9,742 for school pedestrian crossing signs;
- $83,000 for the Nativo Drive road project;
- $46,337 for Precinct IV road repairs approved by the 14th Legislature;
- $11,973 for Precinct I road projects;
- $10,000 for Susupe Beach Park renovation during the 15th Legislature;
- $107,000 for Tangan-tangan Road paving project; and
- $104,000 for the upgrade of the CUC line in Dandan.

NMC was also approved $45,000 for the institution's Coral Road paving.

As of the end of FY2008, available balance for appropriation and allotments from the developer's tax amount is $50,581.

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# Autism Society links with NMPASI

The Autism Society of the CNMI met for their first meeting of the year at the NM Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. office on Pale Arnold Rd. on Saipan to collaborate with NMPASI's administration of the Hope Center, a parents' center launched by the Developmental Disabilities Council. The Society and NMPASI will jointly run the parent's assistance, training and information center.

The Society was organized as a support group for parents of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, a condition that has grown into epidemic proportion in the last twenty years.

Local medical care provider Dr. Adrian Bren who was present at the meeting revealed last year that his practice identified more than double the number of children diagnosed the previous year, a whopping 16 compared to last year's 6.

Twenty years ago, what used to be an incidence of one per 10,000 persons nationally has now become one per 166 persons by the Center for Disease Control statistics. The alarming discovery of the same trend in the CNMI has burdened the public and private educational institutions and assistance agencies in providing the necessary interventions to alleviate the anxieties and depressions resulting in a disease of still indeterminate origin, and of no known 'cure'.

Susanne Lizama, acting Special Education coordinator for the Public School System, added her professional concerns over the absence of any social net beyond the educational option not only for children diagnosed with autism but also for all disabilities.

Diagnosis for autism involves three verifiable indicators, which can trigger immediate referral to a care provider: 1) unresponsiveness to relating to others, e.g., a child's ignoring someone's calls, or avoidance of looking someone in the eye, 2) a verbal and behavioral decline in communication skills, noted by absence of words or gesture to indicate needs and wants, or failing to form the sounds universally associated with parents (dada/nana), and 3) a defined adherence to repetitive behavior such as circling an object, or doing the same action over and over again.

A number of marketed interventions have also proliferated in recent years, from the esoteric to the mundane, the exotic to the commonsense ordinary. Parents John and Marissa Guerrero, active in bringing ASD to the attention of the public, noted the number of advertised "cures." With the passed legislation for the establishment of a two-year Commission on Autism awaiting the Governor's signature, the couple lamented the snail's pace of public response to an overwhelming epidemic.

Without falling into cynicism and despair, Vince and Bobbie Macfalen parent on to guide their child through the demands of college education, resolving that their efforts will focus on their child's desire and ambition, wherever bliss leads.

James Rayphand of NMPASI is shepherding the institutional processes that will undergird the two groups' collaboration. While a firm practitioner of the legal and formal forms of protection and advocacy in service to NMPASI's clientele, educator Rayphand also recognizes the invaluable role of the "soft" technologies brought about when people of the same predicament synergistically gather together to address their common concern. He hopes that the Parent Center will institutionalize practices that will allow families with members diagnosed with disabilities to be able to meet their own requirements.

Larisa Larson, known to be a quiet activist and efficient convener of people around issues relating to autism, serves as the Society's secretary. Through her efforts, the group will intensify the engagement of Autism Society members (as well as those involved previously in the autism groups of PACA and STaRPO) in making themselves available as neighborly resources particularly to new families who may have just been handed the label "autism" to a member of their family.

For further information, contact the NMPASI office at 235-7273/4. ***(Jaime Vergara)***

## Language policy commission meeting Feb. 21

The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Chamorro/Carolinian language policy commission members will conduct its regular meeting on Saturday, Feb. 21, 9am at the Office of Aging conference room.

All interested individuals are invited to attend. For more information, contact Cindy Reyes at 664-5326/27. ***(PR)***


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## Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

### February 16, 1999

**CIP Funds Cut**

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has protested to Washington a plan that would decrease the FY 2000 infrastructure grants that CNMI will receive under a seven-year financial assistance agreement with the US in fear that such move may push the islands into economic instability. The 51 percent cutback in funding for Capital Improvement Projects was contained in the next fiscal year's spending package President Clinton has submitted to Congress. Under the proposed budget, $5.4 million of the $11 million intended for the Northern Marianas will be diverted to Guam to cover the cost of hosting Micronesians by the neighboring island. The amount more than doubled the current level of capital improvement grants Washington extends to Guam from $4.6 million to $10 million to ease the financial impact spawned by the immigration of citizens from the Freely Associated States.

**Governor told: Lobbyist needed**

On the heels of relentless and damaging attacks on the Northern Marianas, several local lawmakers have prodded Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to hire a public relations firm or a lobbying group to defend the island and balance what maybe an irreparable stain on its image in the international community. The local tourism industry, already battered by the prolonged recession in Asia where major haul of its visitors come from, faces serious threat in view of the media firestorm that swirled around the recent lawsuits against Saipan's garment business, according to Rep. Oscar Babauta. The chair of the House Commerce and Tourism Committee also warned against potential impact of the negative publicity in the efforts to attract foreign investments and help spur the local economy.

### February 16, 2000

**Tanapag residents poised to sue US**

Two Texas-based law firms have signified interest in assisting the residents in Tanapag in connection with the planned class action suit to be filed against the U.S. Department of Defense for the widespread contamination of polychlorinated biphenyls in the village. Rep. Dino Jones declined to name the law firms pending the signing of an agreement with village residents. "We will be asking the people to sign the petition designating them as counsels for the case and also the fee agreement. The people will not spend anything while the case is ongoing," he said. He however assured the people that one of the two law firms has a wide experience in handling toxic waste litigation while the other one took charge of the tobacco litigation in Marshall Islands.

**Senate plans to allocate funds for NMC's own SBDC**

The Senate yesterday stood pat on its plan to appropriate funds to a Small Business Development Center under the Northern Marianas College if the federally-financed program is transferred to the Commonwealth Development Authority. Senate Floor Leader Pete Reyes has firmly opposed the transfer of the U.S. Small Business Administration funded program from the college to CDA. He maintained that the SBDC should remain at the NMC even if it entails additional funding from the CNMI government. "If there is no way the transfer of the program from NMC to CDA can be stopped, the only remedy the Legislature can do is to find resources to fund another SBDC at the college," Mr. Reyes said

### February 16, 2001

**NMI cancer patients' treatment in danger**

Treatments of patients with advanced cancer may be put in jeopardy if the Department of Public Health proceeds with its plans to cut its agreement with Hawaii-based Queen's Medical Center due to continued medical billing discrepancies. Based on the updated status report for the Medicaid Agency, off-island medical referral patients only incurred an estimated $18,978.81 to-date but hospital staff continue to turn away DPH patients seeking highly specialized cancer treatments at Queen's. Since October last year, almost $1.711 million worth of medical bills were settled to the Hawaii hospital but billings continue to pile up, leaving DPH officials wondering where payments had been diverted that settled hospital bills always fail to show up.

# NMC to host TRiO open house

The Northern Marianas College will be hosting an open house event on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2009, that will feature three of its federally-funded programs. The three programs, which are all a part of "TRiO," include Student Support Services (SSS), the Educational Talent Search (ETS) Program, and the Upward Bound (UB) Program.

The ETS open house will be held in Building I, and the UB and SSS open houses will be held at Building J at the college's As Terlaje campus. All open houses will run from 1pm to 6pm on Wednesday.

"The TRiO open house is a great opportunity for students and other community members to learn about the different programs that NMC offers," NMC president Dr. Fernandez said. "I especially encourage parents to come find out how we can help their children prepare for college success.

The SSS program is committed to meeting student needs for career guidance, financial support for college, and related support programs to lend support to student achievement.

The ETS program identifies and assists individuals who have the potential to succeed in higher education and aims to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed in high school and enroll in the postsecondary education institution of their choice. It is also designed to help high school students prepare for college.

The UB program provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance and opportunities to succeed in their pre-college performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families along with high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education.

All TRiO programs are 100-percent federally funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, TRiO programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

All community members are encouraged to participate in the open house event. For more information, please log on to www.nmcnet.edu or call 234-5498 at the following extensions: Marian Tudela (UB), ext. 1278; Janice Tenorio (SSS), ext. 1282; and Jeanette Villagomez (ETS), ext. 1347. ***(PR)***

**HAPPY B-DAY DAD & MOM** CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Birthday greetings go out to Daddy Andrei Mendiola (Feb. 16) and Mommy Elinor Amon (Feb. 17). Message from your daughter Elenecca Dee and Oklahoma fans: You are God's Masterpiece, created in His image and by His divine design. He said, "Faith," and gave you the strength to move mountains . . . He said, "Hope," and shaped the desires of your heart . . . He said, "Love," and made you the amazing person that you are.

# Live fire training, laser ranging, and designating at FDM

The Emergency Management Office, in conjunction with U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Guam, would like to inform the public that the U.S. military would be conducting live fire training, laser ranging, and designating on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla in the following dates and times:

■ Feb. 16 -18 and 20, 2009 from 10am to 7pm—Live fire releases.

■ Feb. 19, from 11am to 5pm—Laser ranging and designating.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla Training Area (R7201) on a ten (10) nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, EMO is strongly advising the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—to stay away from this area during the time and dates indicated.

For more information, contact EMO's operations section at 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. ***(EMO)***

# US Attorney Project Safe Childhood PSA unveiled

The United States Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the NMI unveiled its new Project Safe Childhood public service announcements last Thursday at Oleai Elementary School.

The unveiling of the new PSA was made in front of 55 6th grade and 180 7th grade students from Hopwood Jr. High School in San Antonio. The Project Safe Childhood team made an hour and a half presentation at each school.

Project Safe Childhood's goal is to educate parents about the potential dangers that their children face online, and for the first time, warns potential online predators that exploiting a child online is a serious federal offense.

The four new PSAs were developed jointly by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile and Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Project Safe Childhood partners INOBTR ("I Know Better"), IKeepSafe, and the Hispanic Communications Network.

IKeepSafe developed one of the PSAs, entitled "Know Where They Go," to highlight the risks children face on the internet. The PSA, illustrates how, in the digital world, children can travel anywhere, and why it is important that parents monitor what sites their children visit and who they are talking to. Elements of this campaign include television, print, radio and Web advertisements. For more on this PSA, please go to www.KnowWhereTheyGo.org .

INOBTR created a PSA entitled"Exploiting a Minor Is a Major Offense." This cutting-edge campaign is designed to warn potential online predators that exploiting a child online is a serious federal offense. Elements of this campaign include television, movie theaters, print, radio and Web banners. For more on this PSA, please go to www.stopanonlinepredator.org. Two others series were released by the Hispanic Communication Network.

Launched in May 2006, Project Safe Childhood is a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Office, the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Department's Criminal Division, and Internet Crimes Against Children task force, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims

For more information about Project Safe Childhood and the public service announcement, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov. ***(PR)***

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# Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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## EDITORIAL

## Too little in return

The $789-billion stimulus package being rushed through Congress is a decidedly mixed blessing. We welcome lawmakers' focus on the recession, and we agree that the federal government can and should deliver a sizable jolt to the moribund economy. Among the final bill's provisions are several with a strong record of stimulating spending, such as extended unemployment benefits and increased investments in highways and public transit. We also welcome farsighted proposals for promoting broadband Internet access, high-speed rail and a modernized electrical grid. But the version worked out by the White House and congressional leaders serves as a case study for the time-worn notion that haste makes waste.

The bill has three main pieces: $311 billion in discretionary spending, $287 billion in tax cuts and $191 billion in increased benefit programs, such as Medicaid. Scattered throughout each are proposals that advance a political agenda more than an economic one. These range from $2 billion in tax credits for purchasing plug-in electric cars—none of which is on the market today—to a $70-billion reduction in the alternative minimum tax, which is far less likely to increase consumer spending than, say, a similarly sized payroll-tax holiday. And in some cases, the increases expand programs that may be hard to trim after the crisis passes. A good example is the $13 billion in additional funding for Title I, which benefits schools serving low-income students. What's worse, there are no accountability measures attached to those funds and no requirement to create jobs through the program, which has never been shown to improve student achievement. Finally, the bill contains a populist "Buy American" provision that recalls the worst protectionist impulses of the Great Depression.

Congress is certain to approve the current version of the bill, so it's futile to hope for improvements. Instead, we urge state and local governments to make sure taxpayers get the biggest return for the dollars that Washington borrows. A report by Moody's Economy.com last year noted that the most effective stimulus plans put money in the hands of those who have no choice but to spend it. The same report found that infrastructure projects were a good investment, but the "shovel ready" projects pitched by some communities simply aren't worth building. To guard against construction projects that spend for the sake of spending, Brookings Institution urban planner Robert Puentes has offered a bit of sound advice to state and local officials: Put the infrastructure money they receive into repairs and renovations rather than new edifices. Such projects may not be flashy, but they're more likely to be worth the money.

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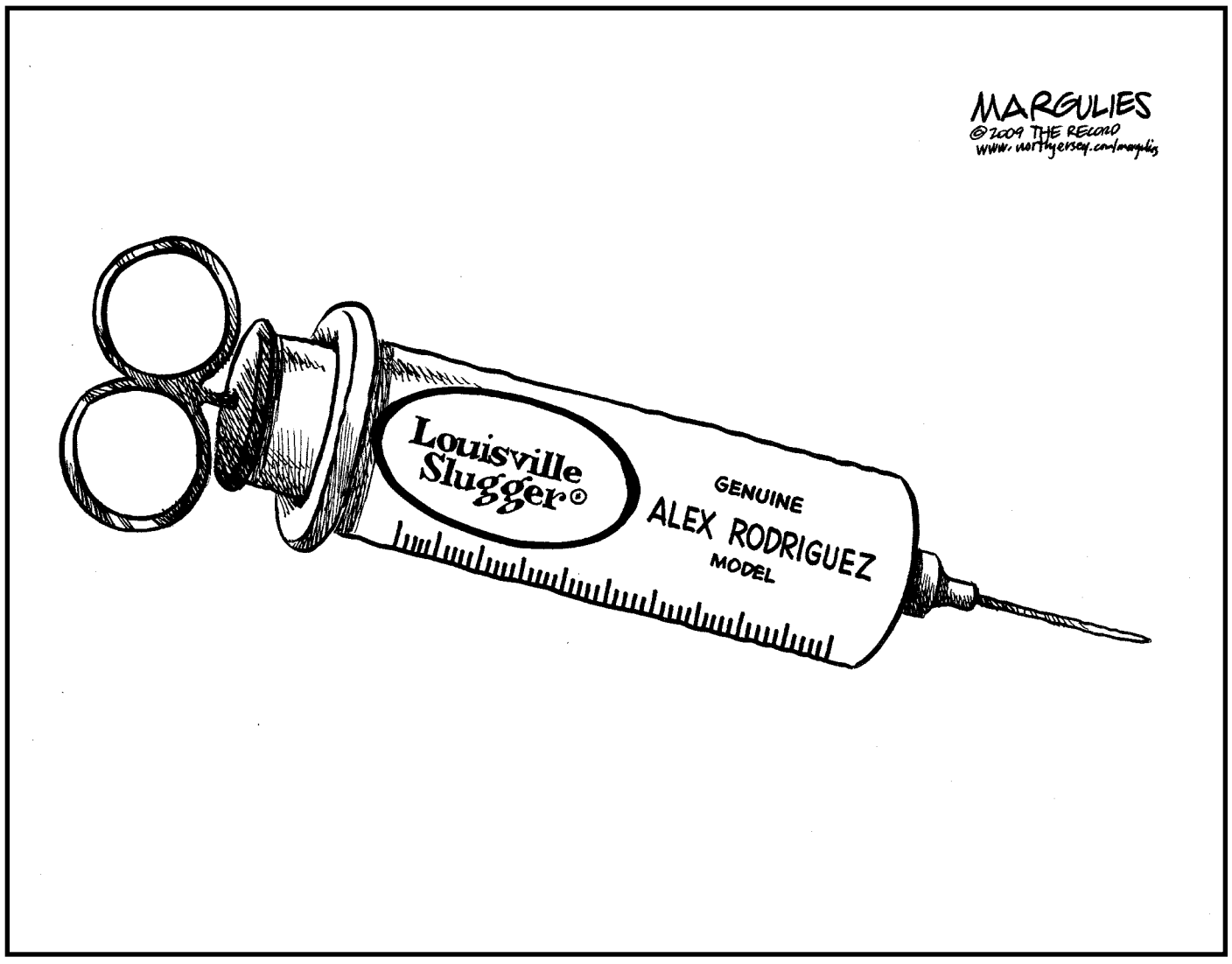



# Political parties and educated voters

**By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.*

The season has opened for aspirants to seek political offices. It is going to be a noisy and rambunctious season. One aspect of all this posturing that interests me is how candidates claim to be members of a political party without the party defining what it stands for. Or, better yet, how candidates shift easily from party to party. What does the candidate really believe in and what does he stand for? What does the party stand for? It's like a carnival shell game where we the voters get conned.

I have always been interested in how candidates bounce from party to party. What is the true character and beliefs of the man or woman we vote for? It's like today I am a Catholic. Suddenly because I don't like something or somebody in that religion, I become a Buddhist. Then a few months later I decide to become a Methodist.

No one in Saipan ever really defines what his political party stands for. What are the party's philosophy that so induce a man or woman to devote his/or her passion and finances to become a standard bearer of that political party? Then how does a candidate change so easily from his supposed belief in a party's philosophy to another? Later in the blink of an eye he will change his beliefs again in desperation and claim to be an independent. Wow! And we elect that person to represent us?

As research for this article, I spent hours trying to understand what the three major political parties in the CNMI—Democratic, Republican, and Covenant—claim to believe in. But all the information about the Democratic or Republican parties seems to apply to the United States. None of it applies to the CNMI. Likewise I found no party philosophy for the Covenant. Yet so many people claim to believe in these parties. Perhaps someone could educate me and the rest of us as to what those beliefs are.

I find it difficult to associate some of the basic beliefs of the Republican and Democratic parties in the United States to events and actions of the parties in the CNMI. There are little if any similarities between what happens in the U.S. and in the CNMI. Therefore the parties' philosophies in the States don't match ours. So how can anyone call himself or herself a Democrat or Republican in the CNMI? What about the beliefs of the Covenant?

I hope the Republican Party, Democratic Party and Covenant Party of the CNMI will take time to explain exactly what they believe in. Their political beliefs and goals must be clearly explained until all of us voters fully understand them. They must clearly define their beliefs and how they stand on issues that pertain to us. This should be done before the voting start.

We must know exactly how each party is going to resolve some of the following problems facing us. We need specific solutions and actions that will be taken to resolve them. Anything less is not worth listening to and is another attempt to fool the public—us!

1. Specifically how is the CUC fiasco going to be solved?
2. What is the winning party going to do to motivate our citizens to learn skills and become the labor force?
3. What is the winning party going to do about insufficient water to our homes?
4. How will the waste water problem be solved?
5. How will the Retirement Fund be funded so that it will be able to pay its members?
6. Will they motivate airlines to fly to Saipan?
7. Will the winning party search for ways to encourage new businesses to invest in the CNMI that will employ local labors?
8. How will they negotiate the Federalization issue?

(**You add your thoughts to the list**.)

If we can get the political parties to profess what they believe in, then we must do the same for its slate of candidates. Please let's stop being fooled by the candidates' empty rhetoric. I have stopped going to pocket meetings because of the nonsense that is spewed-out at those meetings. Somehow we feel that if we eat the food and drink offered, we are obligated to swallow their gobbledygook.

If we want honest and sincere politicians to work with us to improve our community, we must also do our part. We must study the issues. We must put in the effort to study what we want and how to obtain it. And then elect the proper candidates. Anything less will be a derelict of duty on our part. If we don't do our due diligent work, then we deserve more of the same type of smooth-talking candidates. We must become educated voters. We must exercise our power to make the needed changes. And we must stop voting for incompetent family members!

We must examine every candidate's personal life before we vote for him. I believe that most candidates are sincere and honest when they begin their attempt to win a seat. Most of them truly feel they can make a difference and that it will be an easy job to convince others to do so. However once elected they get lost in the scuffle.

They realize that they have come unprepared for the political

***See POLITICAL on Next Page***

**EDITORIAL POLICY** The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

LAND OWNERSHIP CONTROL STIFLES GROWTH, DEV'T

# The Article 12 experience in the past 25 years

By JOSE S. DELA CRUZ
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

***Fourth of a six-part series***

Because of the experience foreign investors have had with their real estate investment over the past 20 to 30 years, they are now reluctant to make further investments in the CNMI if the present land ownership regime continues. The restriction as now set forth in Article 12 of the NMI constitution is, without a doubt, rigid and inflexible. Any transaction in violation of Article 12 results in the nullification of the land transaction, *ab initio* (i.e. void from the very beginning). Article 12 does not give the courts any power to fashion a remedy (short of nullification) that would be fair and equitable to both sides. The law, in essence, ties the hands of the court in terms of the remedy (legal and equitable) that the court could order or decree. The only remedy available under the NMI constitution for an Article 12 violation is for the transaction to be declared *void from the beginning*, no matter how harsh such remedy is on the parties or on innocent third-parties.

The amount of litigation in the area of Article 12, in the past, consumed so much time, energy and resources for both the landowner and the investor. Over a period of more than ten years—from 1985 to about 1995, most of the major land issues were litigated and decided by the courts. In the end, however, much damage was done to the trust and confidence between landowners and investors. What were the reasons for this sad state of affairs? There were many reasons actually. The first major litigation was a direct challenge to the constitutionality of the land alienation restriction under Article 12, pursuant the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The federal courts ultimately determined that the land alienation restriction does not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, since land ownership is not considered a fundamental right in the territories; unlike the 50 States where property ownership is considered a fundamental right.

The second set of litigation dealt with the issue regarding the transfer of land title to a person other than the one furnishing the purchase-money for the land being purchased. Reversing the NMI Supreme Court on this issue, the federal courts eventually resolved this issue in favor of the new titleholder, provided that he/she is a person of NMI descent. It was decided that no "equitable fee ownership" results in favor of the person not of NMI descent who furnished the purchase money for the land. It ruled that Article 12 itself prohibits an equitable fee simple ownership from arising in favor of the person (who furnished the money to purchase the land) if he/she is not of NMI descent. It decided that Article 12 itself trumped the common law principle that equitable fee ownership in the land is automatically created in favor of the person providing the purchase-money for the purchase of the land. So this issue has been laid to rest through the judicial process, but its bitter-taste still remain for many on both sides of the Article 12 dispute.

*Jose S. Dela Cruz is a former justice in the CNMI Supreme Court.*

## Letter to the Editor

# BO in the White House

It is Presidents' Day, traditionally focused on the father of the nation, the royalty-allergic general of the American Revolution, George Washington, who refused to be king, and the tall, lanky Midwest frontiersman Abraham Lincoln who penned the immortal Gettysburg Address and whose name is attached to the Emancipation Declaration freeing slaves in the United States.

Author Kirkpatrick Sale of the *Human Scale* fame and a stalwart in the bioregional movement of the ecological revolution, recently wrote a scathing critique of Abe Lincoln. As is well known, Lincoln is a darling of both the political right and left for he seemed to have left behind enough pearls of wisdom that the whole ideological spectrum can hang their hats on, and they do. Sale points out that Lincoln "presided over the creation of what can only be called a nascent fascist government led by a party of industrial capitalism that ran roughshod over constitution and custom." He then accuses Obama who has made Lincoln a model of his presidency, of faithfully following in Lincoln steps toward a failed capitalist system.

"We've got two choices. One is the Lincolnesque way that Obama seems to promise: government subsidies for the larger corporations and banks (as Lincoln pushed in his day, especially for the railroads), refurbishing of the infrastructure (ditto) nationalization of the financial system and reckless printing of currency, increased centralization of the government and its hold on the economy, continuation and expansion of warfare and the war machine (all ditto). That is a continuation of the past, and it is amazing that the nation largely does not recognize it as a recipe for continued collapse. It is in fact not sustainable, nor is the environment in which it is floundering." The other choice is to totally repudiate and change the system.

Well, there goes my Lincoln. It is, however, to current White House basketball-bouncing resident President Barack Hussein Obama that I focus my musing this Monday morning.

Before the elections, I noticed that about 70 percent of my Filipino-American colleagues were voting Republican and I first heard the joke of "BO in the White House." Filipinos are known for their green and toilet jokes so it did not come as a surprise that a stereotype on body odeur would make it to the comedy central of Pinoy discourse.

After the elections, it did not take long for a picture of what would not be uncommon in rural Africa of a truckload of luggage sat upon by what seems to be a whole tribe of people to make several go-round throughout the Internet. This was supposed to be BO's tribe on its way to Washington, followed just before the inauguration by a re-painted picture of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. labeled "the Black House."

As with every stereotype, the one on body odor is often based on factual data blown into disproportionate assertion of universal application. At a community-based human development training school around Lake Lagos in Nigeria in the early '80s attended by community development practitioners, I asked a colleague in the sweltering tropical heat why it was that with the new wealth of West Africa, they have yet to discover the virtues of deodorants. He responded: "Well, if we could not smell each other, how would we know who belongs to the same tribe and who doesn't?"

Indeed, as is known among cultural anthropologists, the difference in cultural habits around the world had been influenced by the environment, accentuating practices that often favor one sense perception over the other. In the dark canopies of the rainforests close to the Niger or the Congo Rivers, sight may not have been the favored sense perception; undoubtedly, smell, touch and sound are. It is thus conceivable that one recognized a friend or a foe by their smell. We all know about the beat and rhythm that would enrich the New Orleans' sound from early humankind's beginnings affirming sensibilities toward the physicality of human existence.

A stereotype that a French friend once narrated is the one about the French perfumers devising essences to dab behind the ears of the British ladies in the Royal Court as they were not given to taking baths in the winter and their presence in the royal boudoir would be more tolerable than just with body *odeur au naturel*.

Now, we are warned against the aluminum content of deodorants which effectively blocks perspiration but also bars the proper functioning of the underarm sewage system. Thus, the toxicity that normally gets excreted is turned back into the blood system causing bodily dysfunctions and diseases. Chinese herbs and Southeast Asian spices have been known to influence body odors, and learning about them might be a healthier approach to plugging the sewers. Having resided in Hawaii and Indonesia, BO at the White House might just be familiar with all these.

It was in the aftermath of World War II in the waning days of the colonial powers that the principle of not changing the geographical delineations of colonies be observed by the superpowers. Immediately, the emerging nations of Africa broke into Civil Wars as tribes staked their claim on sovereignty over that of others.

Blackness (Stokeley Carmichael's "Black is Beautiful, Baby!"), tribal loyalties (in my time, Black power of the Black Panthers on Chicago's Westside) and now, Body Odor, all attesting to the basic physicality of human existence again come to fore. And I join the choir in saying: "Amen! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!"

Rene Descartes the mathematician in the 17th century said: *cogito ergo sum*, "I think, therefore, I am." Human identity and vocation had been creatures of the mind ever since. A recent study of many PhD holders driving taxicabs and waiting on tables revealed the fact that our University education trains many in intellectual knowledge without grounding on practical wisdom, thus, the plethora of experts able to manipulate the language of words and numbers, but lost in the art and skill of human existence. When we think ourselves into existence without grounding in the woof and warp of reality, we become creatures of illusions. Happily, wily reality has a way of pricking our illusory balloons!

Recovering the wisdom of the body (which a group called Interplay in Oakland, CA has been doing for the last 20 years) may just be what a unreluctant physical presence BO in the White House is signaling as a paradigm shift needed by mainstream America. (One thing I always appreciated from Gov. Babauta was his regular evening jaunts on the lagoon pathway!) With an obesity figure ranging up to 60 percent of the population, and mental health diseases hitting all time highs, innovative and creative health care providers are pointing back to our ability to listen to our bodies. The pharmacological revolution, alas, has led to internecine violence among the drug cartels, legal and illegal, as addiction to the quick fix had taken a criminal character. Not to mention the toxic mercury in the thimerosal in vaccines that has since come to haunt the autism community, but that's for another Monday of musing.

For now, BO in the White House has come to mean an affirmation of the grand physicality of human life—the discipline of depth awareness of reality's impact on our senses is contemplation, the inward reflection of our sense responses to external reality is soulful meditation, and the willful acting in reality becomes authentic prayer. What the Christians refer to as the physicality of grace may just come upon us!

**Jaime Vergara**
*Via e-mail*

## POLITICAL

*From Page 10*

jockeying and the give and take that is the style of the political arena. As a result they get lost and become ineffective. Notice the number of short timers. I am referring to the ones that serve one term and then vanish. Meanwhile we the citizens end up with do-nothingers.

Let's remember what past voting for ineffective and related candidates has done to us. Let's avoid the same mistakes. I am not suggesting that you vote for so and so. But I am strongly telling all of us: We must select better qualified leaders. We must educate ourselves on the issues at stake and the candidates' abilities to make necessary changes. It is our duty!

Let's ask what has the candidate done in the community to better it prior to running for office? What are his true motives for running for office? What qualifications does he have except a big family? What is his work experience? Has he been a successful member of the community? What is his educational background? How well is he informed on the issues? And other questions which will reveal his true abilities.

Another point that has always interested me is what do former elected officials do in the period between when they lose an election and the next election? Do they engage in community and volunteer work to show that they are truly interested in us. For two years or even four years we never hear about this candidate.

Suddenly it is election time and he creeps out of the woodwork and proclaims his candidacy. Is this the type of candidate we need? Is he looking out for our benefit or does he need a job desperately because he is running out of money? Hmm!

I could go on and on but the real problem lies with each of us. Regardless of what I state here, unless you demand that the political parties clearly state their objectives and that their slate of candidates be more wisely selected, we will never improve. As long as we keep voting for family-related members, we will keep getting more of the same type of government that we have had for years.

Each of us must convince others that change can only come from sincere and well-educated candidates elected by educated voters. Let's stop listening to false prophets. To keep voting in the same way as we have will continue the downward slide we are in now. Please-- for once in our short political career can we just try it—vote for who we truly believe will do a great job, not a family member or a smooth talker.

You want change? Than do it! Let's get off our "buts" (excuses) and vote more intelligently!

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

| TODAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph. | Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. |
| ▲87° ▼77° | ▲87° ▼77° | ▲87° ▼77° | ▲87° ▼77° | ▲87° ▼77° |

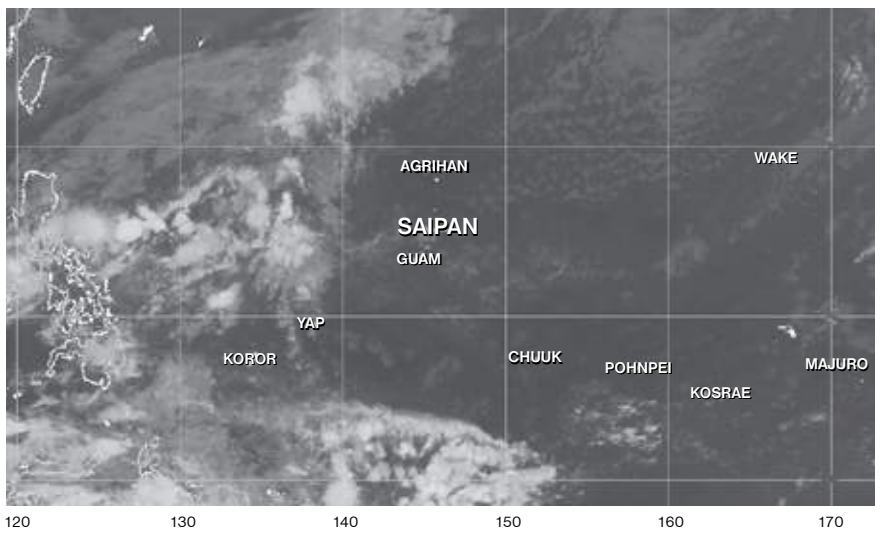
## Micronesia

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Guam and Rota | Partly Sunny | ▲85 | ▼74 |
| Palau | Partly Sunny | ▲87 | ▼78 |
| Yap | Mostly Sunny | ▲86 | ▼76 |
| Chuuk | Sunny | ▲88 | ▼80 |
| Pohnpei | Sunny | ▲87 | ▼75 |
| Kosrae | Showers | ▲88 | ▼76 |
| Majuro | Showers | ▲84 | ▼76 |

## Around The Globe

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Auckland | Mostly Cloudy | ▲70 | ▼61 |
| Beijing | Sunny | ▲33 | ▼20 |
| Hong Kong | Mostly Sunny | ▲76 | ▼63 |
| Honolulu | Mostly Cloudy | ▲77 | ▼70 |
| London | Cloudy | ▲48 | ▼40 |
| Los Angeles | Cloudy | ▲58 | ▼48 |
| Manila | Cloudy | ▲90 | ▼75 |
| Melbourne | Cloudy | ▲76 | ▼63 |
| Miami | Mostly Sunny | ▲79 | ▼60 |
| New York | Mostly Sunny | ▲38 | ▼26 |
| Osaka | Showers | ▲41 | ▼28 |
| Paris | Showers | ▲43 | ▼35 |
| Pusan | Mostly Cloudy | ▲41 | ▼20 |
| Rome | Dreary | ▲47 | ▼25 |
| Salem | Mostly Cloudy | ▲45 | ▼37 |
| San Francisco | Cloudy | ▲53 | ▼47 |
| Seoul | Mostly Sunny | ▲24 | ▼ 7 |
| Tokyo | Flurries | ▲42 | ▼28 |
| Washington, DC | Mostly Sunny | ▲43 | ▼25 |

## Yesterday's Satellite Image




**PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, FEB. 15, 2009**
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front enters the discussion area at 25N178E and extends southwestward to 23N176E then continues as a shear line to north of Pohnpei at 13N158E and turns westward to just southwest of Guam at 13N142E then finally turns northwestward to end at 15N137E east of Wake Island. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 250 miles northwest of this boundary west of Wake Island to 138E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are seen along and up to 150 miles north of the shear line. A low-level trough extends northeastward from the Philippines to 13N130E then turns northward to 23N133E. Aided by upper-level divergence, scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring near the trough axis over an area from north of Koror to southwest of Iwo To island. This area is between 9N and 25N from 130E to 138E. Converging southeast winds southeast of the trough are causing scattered showers over Palau and Yap between the equator and 9N from 130E to 140E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms near the equator well south of Guam, Chuuk and Pohnpei south of a line from 5N140E to 1N159E. Scattered showers are seen over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls south of a line from 2N166E to 4N174E to 3N180. Mid to high-level cloudiness from earlier showers are found over Kwajalein and Majuro between 3N and 11N from 166E to 175E.

## Tides

**Saipan Harbor**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 12:52 AM Today | High Tide: | 1.4 Feet |
| 6:03 AM Today | Low Tide: | 1.0 Feet |
| 11:41 AM Today | High Tide: | 1.8 Feet |
| 7:23 PM Today | Low Tide: | 0.2 Feet |

## Sunrise/Sunset

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 6:41 AM | 6:21 PM |
| Tuesday | 6:41 AM | 6:21 PM |
| Wednesday | 6:40 AM | 6:22 PM |
| Thursday | 6:40 AM | 6:22 PM |
| Friday | 6:39 AM | 6:22 PM |

## Moonrise/Moonset

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Today | | 11:02 AM |
| Tuesday | 12:22 AM | 11:47 AM |
| Wednesday | 1:15 AM | 12:35 PM |
| Thursday | 2:07 AM | 1:26 PM |
| Friday | 2:57 AM | 2:18 PM |

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

**PICTURES**

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**For pictures:**

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

**For announcements:**

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

**HOW TO SUBMIT**

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

### DEPARTURES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Saipan-Rota** | | | |
| CO9597 | 11:50am | 12:25pm | 1,7 |
| **Saipan-Guam** | | | |
| CO9317 | 5:00am | 5:50am | Daily |
| CO9313 | 8:30am | 9:20am | Daily |
| CO9597 | 11:50am | 1:20pm | 1,7 via Rota |
| CO9601 | 12:30pm | 1:20pm | 2,3,4,5,6 |
| CO9603 | 3:30pm | 4:20pm | Daily |
| CO9605 | 6:30pm | 7:20pm | Daily |
| CO9599 | 9:30pm | 10:20pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Narita** | | | |
| NW 099 | 5:00am | 7:35am | Daily |
| NW 078 | 8:20am | 1:30pm | 2,3,4,5,6,7 |
| NW 075 | 4:55pm | 7:30pm | Daily |
| **Guam-Narita** | | | |
| NW 73 | 4:10pm | 7:00pm | Daily |
| NW 81 | 3:55pm | 6:55pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Osaka** | | | |
| OZ 119 | 4:00am | 6:40am | 1,4,6 |
| NW 083 | 4:30pm | 7:20pm | Daily |
| **Guam-Osaka** | | | |
| NW 79 | 4:45pm | 7:35pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Nagoya** | | | |
| NW 078 | 8:20am | 11:05am | Daily |
| **Guam-Nagoya** | | | |
| NW 23 | 4:30pm | 7:20pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Incheon** | | | |
| OZ 604 | 2:10am | 6:00am | 1 |
| OZ 604 | 2:40am | 6:30am | 2,3,4,5,6,7 |
| OZ 119 | 4:00am | 11:25am | 1,4,6 via Osaka |
| OZ 606 | 3:20pm | 7:00pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Busan** | | | |
| OZ 608 | 3:20am | 6:50am | 1,4,5,7 |
| **Saipan-Shanghai** | | | |
| FM 844 | 2:50am | 5:40am | 2,6 |
| **Rota-Guam** | | | |
| CO 9597 | 12:50pm | 1:20pm | 1,7 |
| **Guam-Palau** | | | |
| CO 953 | 7:40pm | 8:40pm | 1,7 |
| CO 893 | 5:50pm | 6:50pm | 3,5 |
| **Palau-Manila** | | | |
| CO 893 | 7:35pm | 9:10pm | 3,5 |
| **Guam-Manila** | | | |
| CO 893 | 5:50pm | 9:10pm | 3,5 via Koror |
| CO 933 | 8:00pm | 9:40pm | Daily |
| PR 111 | 6:00am | 7:50am | 1,2,4,6,7 |
| **Nagoya-Manila** | | | |
| NW 71 | 8:40pm | 11:55pm | Daily |
| **Incheon-Hongkong** | | | |
| OZ 721 | 9:20am | 12:00pm | Daily |
| OZ 723 | 7:45pm | 10:35pm | Daily |
| OZ 7173 | 8:00pm | 10:50pm | 5,7 |
| **Narita-Manila** | | | |
| NW 1 | 7:00pm | 10:55pm | Daily |

### ARRIVALS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Rota-Saipan** | | | |
| CO 9598 | 3:25am | 4:00am | 5,6 |
| **Guam-Saipan** | | | |
| CO 9316 | 2:30am | 3:20am | 1,2,3,4,7 |
| CO9598 | 2:30am | 4:00am | 5,6 via Rota |
| CO9596 | 7:00am | 7:50am | Daily |
| CO9600 | 10:20am | 11:10am | Daily |
| CO9602 | 2:00pm | 2:50pm | Daily |
| CO9604 | 5:00pm | 5:50pm | Daily |
| CO9606 | 8:00pm | 8:50pm | Daily |
| **Narita-Saipan** | | | |
| NW 076 | 10:15am | 2:40pm | Daily |
| NW 077 | 6:25pm | 1:20am+1 | 2,3,4,5,6,7 |
| NW 100 | 8:45pm | 1:10am+1 | Daily |
| **Narita-Guam** | | | |
| NW 74 | 9:45am | 2:20pm | Daily |
| NW 82 | 10:30am | 3:10pm | Daily |
| **Osaka-Saipan** | | | |
| OZ 120 | 9:50pm | 2:20am+1 | 3,5,7 |
| NW 084 | 10:40am | 3:05pm | Daily |
| **Osaka-Guam** | | | |
| NW 80 | 10:30am | 3:00pm | Daily |
| **Nagoya-Saipan** | | | |
| NW 077 | 9:00pm | 1:20am+1 | Daily |
| **Nagoya-Guam** | | | |
| NW 24 | 10:00am | 2:30pm | Daily |
| **Incheon-Saipan** | | | |
| OZ 605 | 9:00am | 2:20pm | Daily |
| OZ 603 | 7:40pm | 1:00am+1 | 7 |
| OZ 120 | 7:10pm | 2:20am+1 | 3,5,7 via Osaka |
| OZ 603 | 8:10pm | 1:30am+1 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 |
| **Busan-Saipan** | | | |
| OZ 607 | 9:00pm | 2:10am+1 | 3,4,6,7 |
| **Shanghai-Saipan** | | | |
| FM 843 | 7:15pm | 1:50am+1 | 1,5 |
| **Guam-Rota** | | | |
| CO 9598 | 2:30am | 3:00am | 5,6 |
| **Palau-Guam** | | | |
| CO 954 | 2:30am | 5:25am | 1,2 |
| CO 892 | 2:35am | 5:30am | 4,6 |
| **Manila-Palau** | | | |
| CO 892 | 10:10pm | 1:50am+1 | 3,5 |
| **Manila-Guam** | | | |
| CO 892 | 10:10pm | 5:30am+1 | 3,5 via Koror |
| CO 934 | 11:10pm | 4:40am+1 | Daily |
| PR 110 | 10:10pm | 4:00am+1 | 1,3,5,6,7 |
| **Manila-Nagoya** | | | |
| NW 72 | 6:30am | 11:05am | Daily |
| **Hongkong-Incheon** | | | |
| OZ 724 | 12:30am | 4:50am | Daily |
| OZ 7183 | 12:45am | 5:05am | 1,4,6 |
| OZ 722 | 1:30pm | 5:45pm | Daily |
| **Manila-Narita** | | | |
| NW 2 | 7:45am | 12:40pm | Daily |

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

| Airline | ETD | ETA | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Guam-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 100 | 7:00am | 7:30am | Daily |
| **Rota-Saipan** | | | |
| FRE 100 | 7:50am | 8:20am | Daily |
| **Saipan-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 200 | 9:00am | 9:30am | Daily |
| **Rota-Guam** | | | |
| FRE 200 | 9:50am | 10:15am | Daily |
| **Guam-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 300 | 4:00pm | 4:30pm | Daily |
| **Rota-Saipan** | | | |
| FRE 300 | 4:50pm | 5:25pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 400 | 6:00pm | 6:30pm | Daily |
| **Rota-Guam** | | | |
| FRE 400 | 6:45pm | 7:15pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Tinian** | | | |
| FRE 101 | 6:45am | 6:55am | Daily |
| FRE 103 | 7:30am | 7:40am | Daily |
| FRE 105 | 8:00am | 8:10am | Daily |
| FRE 107 | 8:40am | 8:50am | Daily |
| FRE 109* | 9:10am | 9:20am | Daily |
| FRE 111* | 10:45am | 10:55am | Daily |

| Airline | ETD | ETA | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|
| FRE 113 | 11:40am | 11:50am | Daily |
| FRE 115 | 1:00pm | 1:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 117 | 2:30pm | 2:40pm | Daily |
| FRE 119 | 4:00pm | 4:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 121 | 4:40pm | 4:50pm | Daily |
| FRE 123 * | 5:40pm | 5:50pm | Daily |
| FRE 125 * | 6:00pm | 6:10pm | Daily |
| **Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**** | | | |
| FRE 102 | 7:05am | 7:15am | Daily |
| FRE 104 | 7:50am | 8:00am | Daily |
| FRE 106** | 8:20am | 8:30am | Daily |
| FRE 108** | 9:00am | 9:10am | Daily |
| FRE 110 | 10:00am | 10:10am | Daily |
| FRE 112 | 11:05am | 11:15am | Daily |
| FRE 114 | 12:00pm | 12:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 116 | 1:30pm | 1:40pm | Daily |
| FRE 118 | 2:50pm | 3:00pm | Daily |
| FRE 120** | 4:20pm | 4:30pm | Daily |
| FRE 122** | 5:00pm | 5:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 124 | 6:05pm | 6:15pm | Daily |
| FRE 126 | 6:20pm | 6:30pm | Daily |

## Letter to the Editor

# Crossing the line

An open letter to Charles Reyes Jr.: As the governor's spokesman, most of what you say is taken by the vast majority of CNMI citizens as politically inspired garbage. In other words, you are not taken seriously. On Monday, Feb. 6, however, you crossed the line.

In the article on Feb. 6, Rep. Tina Sablan was commenting on the spiraling degradation of CUC, despite the numerous and overused state of emergency declarations by the governor. In her capacity as the chairperson of the Saipan legislative delegation's Public Utilities and Infrastructure Committee, conducting oversight investigation of CUC, she presented a very sober picture of CUC's financial and management problems. She was stating the facts which have been obvious to many: CUC is mismanaged, it is insolvent, there is a lack of responsiveness from your boss to create an overall plan, many decent proposals (including those for renewable energy) have fallen on deaf ears, and a cornucopia of other financial and management inconsistencies, blunders, and very suspect practices. And what was your response? Asked for comment, Reyes said the emergency declaration extension is legally necessary to keep the Aggreko generators operating and to keep the power flowing.

Why is it legally necessary? Please explain this legal necessity to the folks paying for CUC's mistakes and questionable overpriced contracts. Since a full public accounting has never been made from the Aggerko deal, one would conclude that instead of keeping the power flowing, it's more likely that these declarations have been keeping something else flowing. And originally we were told that this was for one year only. Remember that? Something stinks with this whole contract... and with those who defend it, since there were much more viable and cheaper options made available at the time. Your vague defense of the continued emergency makes me question this contract all that much more.

*Whew...talk about a diehard hypocrite. Your rather pointed comments at Rep. Sablan sound all too familiar with what your boss was doing with the suit against the federal government. And to say such comments about the legislator who received the highest marks from the citizens of the CNMI in Rep. Joseph Camacho's interim poll, well, Junior you are barking up the wrong tree. The administration is the one hostile and adversarial to those who are looking into CUC management, past and present.*

CUC has just hired an expert. Haven't there been enough experts, consultants, reports, and committees wasting taxpayers money? Wasn't Mr. Muna supposed to be the person your boss chose to fix the ills of CUC? We are no closer to fixing the problem and a lot poorer. Tony Muna has repeatedly provided information to the Legislature regarding CUC. Not only are the fiscal facts notoriously incorrect but mostly Mr. Muna just tells us that we can't move on with any projects because there is no money. Hmmmm....maybe receivership just might be the most viable option (since privatizing seems to be a moot point now). So far, the band-aid approach is just sinking us deeper in this quagmire. What the heck, let's try another expert. It's only money. When all the money is gone, maybe then you would agree to privatizing with the bidding starting at, oh, say, a dollar. Or maybe receivership will finally be accepted as the *only* option.

Junior, you fundamentally crossed the line with the following statement: "It is very unfortunate that some legislators choose to take on a very negative, counterproductive, adversarial and hostile approach with the administration regarding CUC and other matters, while the Commonwealth is in crisis." Whew...talk about a diehard hypocrite. Your rather pointed comments at Rep. Sablan sound all too familiar with what your boss was doing with the suit against the federal government. And to say such comments about the legislator who received the highest marks from the citizens of the CNMI in Rep. Joseph Camacho's interim poll, well, Junior you are barking up the wrong tree. The administration is the one hostile and adversarial to those who are looking into CUC management, past and present. If you want cooperation, then open up the books, be transparent, make a workable plan, and desist from negative comments about those very legislators who are trying to help the CNMI and who have no ulterior motive except to try to set things on a positive course. That's cooperation.

Any problem, Charlie, with your boss opening up all the books? I see this as a classic case of prisoners' dilemma in game theory, where the political players, pursuing their own unenlightened, short-sighted and narrow self interest, choose unhealthy conflict and defection over cooperation and collaboration. Huh? The only game I see is your usual obfuscation of the truth and an attempt at a hostile offense as a poor substitute for any real defense. Self-interest? Rep. Sablan? Not hardly. Unhealthy conflict? The CNMI should be thankful for those who are in conflict with the corruption rampant on Capital Hill. Lack of cooperation and collaboration? Where was that cooperation and collaboration when your boss said that he was not using public funds to pursue his quixotic suit against the feds, continued to use public funds when the combined Legislature suggested that public funds should not be used, and has refused to open the books against all legal requests per the Open Government Act, based on your spurious argument that we can't let the U.S. government know how much money we are using to fight them. Come on, Charlie. Talk about game playing.

How about you cooperate with the committee investigating CUC? Or is there too much too hide? Better, yet, let Rep. Tina Sablan take over CUC for one year and see if things improve. Certainly she can't do any worse than the governor and his political appointees. And with someone who clearly cares about the interests of the citizens of the CNMI, who is honest and transparent and open to the public...well, that would certainly be a positive step toward improving CUC. I would suggest you do that in the interest of cooperation. Or are there things hidden behind closed doors and offshore accounts of which an honest CUC director might ferret out, and expose some of the elites' financial secrets to the hardworking taxpayers and citizens of the CNMI?

Junior, you should be cautious when your self-serving and vicious comments are directed at one of the few legislators who are trying to right the many wrongs of the current administration. Remember, she got the highest marks for any legislator in the interim poll. How would you fare against her in a CNMI poll based on honesty, integrity, and transparency? Think about that, Charlie, and then look closely at yourself in the mirror and ask if what you see is someone you are proud of.

**Bill Weiss**
*Puerto Rico, Saipan*

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Attorneys for Plaintiff Commonwealth Development Authority.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

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|---|---|
| **COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,** Plaintiff, vs. **RENATO G. AZUCENAS, JORGE M. MANALILI, DIONISIO P. GAMBOA, and EMON LODGE NO. 179,** Defendants. | **Civil Action No. 01-0363B** **AMENDED NOTICE OF AUCTION FOR CITY TRUST BANK SHARES** |

The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, hereinafter referred to as auctioneer, and the Development Corporation Division of the Commonwealth Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as CDA, hereby gives notice that all of the right, title, and interest of the Defendant Renato G. Azucenas's City Trust Bank stock shares, in the following 215,644 shares of common stock in City Trust Bank, Inc., will be sold at an auction sale:

**City Trust Bank, Inc Share Certificate #23;**
**City Trust Bank, Inc Share Certificate #28;**
**City Trust Bank, Inc Share Certificate #46;**
**City Trust Bank, Inc Share Certificate #52;**
**and**
**City Trust Bank, Inc Share Certificate #57**

Notice is hereby given that the 215,644 shares to be sold at auction may be sold in accordance with the numbers of shares represented by each individual share certificate, or may be sold in smaller blocks of shares at CDA's discretion.

The auction sale will be open to the general public and will be held at CDA's Conference Room, Saipan, at **2:00 p.m., on Friday, February 27, 2009,** subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

1. **Minimum Bid. NO MINIMUM BID.**
2. Reserve. The auction shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of CDA as Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, CDA shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:
   a.) To withdraw the shares listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such shares is accepted.
   b.) To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific shares are struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c.) To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the shares listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Oscar C. Camacho, Officer-In-Charge, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7145, Fax: 234-7144; or to Law Office of F. Matthew Smith, LLC, P.O. Box 501127, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.
5. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title, and interest in any of the aforementioned shares shall revert to CDA.
6. Change of Terms. CDA reserves the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
7. Banking Licensing Requirements. Bidders should be advised that the total interest in City Trust Bank represented by the shares to be auctioned may represent five percent (5%) or more of the total shares in City Trust Bank. Purchase by any one bidder of an amount of shares equal to or exceeding five percent (5%) of the shares in City Trust Bank may subject such buyer and City Trust Bank to the requirements of 4 CMC §6226(e).
8. **Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the shares. Please contact CDA if you desire to schedule a viewing or inspection of the documents possessed by CDA. The interests in the shares are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the shares or any related documents will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.**

Dated this 20th day of January, 2009.

/S/ SANTIAGO F. TUDELA, Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

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Attorneys for Plaintiff Commonwealth Development Authority.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

| | |
|---|---|
| **COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,** Plaintiff, vs. **DONALD G. FLORES, CECILIA U. FLORES, WILLIAM R. CONCEPCION, LILLIAN U. CONCEPCION, and ISLAND RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, INC.,** Defendants. | **Civil Action No. 98-506C** **NOTICE OF AUCTION** |

The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, hereinafter referred to as auctioneer, and the Development Corporation Division of the Commonwealth Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as CDA, hereby give notice that all of the right, title, and interest of the Defendants Donald G. Flores, Cecilia U. Flores, William R. Concepcion, Lillian U. Concepcion and Island Resources Development, Inc., in the following described real property situated in Saipan, CNMI will be sold at an auction:

**Lot H 468, 468A & Lot 439-7-2 (part of H-468, 468A & Lot 439)**
Beginning at a corner which is designated as Corner No. 1, having plane rectangular coordinates of 47,004.35 meters North and 51,641.12 meters East of the Mariana Islands coordinate system of 1966.

Thence N 47º 24' 27" E, 56.10 meters to Corner 2;
Thence S 62º 33' 0" E, 103.62 meters to Corner 3;
Thence S 33º 30' 59" W, 70.82 meters to Corner 4;
Thence N 64º05' 36" W, 116.68 meters to Corner 5;
Thence N 31º09' 46" E, 20.88 meters to Corner 1, the point of beginning.

The above described property contains an area of 8,071 square meters, more or less, including all improvements, appurtenances and easements therewith.

The auction sale will be open to the general public and will be held at CDA's Conference Room, Saipan, at **2:00 p.m., on Friday, March 6, 2009,** subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

1. **Minimum Bid. No minimum opening bid.**
2. Reserve. The auction shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auctions with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction:
   a.) To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
   b.) To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c.) To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Oscar C. Camacho, Officer-In-Charge, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7145, Fax: 235-7147; or to F. Matthew Smith, P.O. Box 501127, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.
5. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check or credit card. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.
6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
7. **Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property; contact CDA for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of Donald G. Flores, Cecilia U. Flores, William R. Concepcion, Lillian U. Concepcion and Island Resources Development, Inc., in the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty, and subject to the redemption laws of the CNMI. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.**

Dated this 4th day of February 2009.

/s/ SANTIAGO F. TUDELA, Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

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Attorneys for Plaintiff Commonwealth Development Authority.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

| | |
|---|---|
| **COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,** Plaintiff, vs. **ESTATE OF GEORGE A. MANGLONA and KEIKO Y. MANGLONA,** Defendants. | **Civil Action No. 94-1108** **NOTICE OF AUCTION** |

The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, hereinafter referred to as auctioneer, and the Development Corporation Division of the Commonwealth Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as CDA, hereby give notice that all of the right, title, and interest of the Defendants the estate of George A. Manglona and Keiko Y. Manglona in the lease of the following described real property situated in the CNMI will be sold at an auction:

**Lot No. 006 T 158** and containing an area of 1,178 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 006 T 05, dated September 28, 1983, including all improvements, appurtenances and easements therewith.

The Lease of Real Property is dated March 15, 1993 (File No, 93-795), with a term ending on October 26, 2042.

The auction sale will be open to the general public and will be held at CDA's Conference Room, Saipan, at **2:00 p.m., on Friday, March 6, 2009,** subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

1. **Minimum Bid. No minimum opening bid.**
2. Reserve. The auction shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auctions with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction:
   a.) To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
   b.) To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c.) To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Oscar C. Camacho, Officer-In-Charge, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7145, Fax: 235-7147; or to F. Matthew Smith, P.O. Box 501127, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.
5. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check or credit card. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.
6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
7. **Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property; contact CDA for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the estate of George A. Manglona and Keiko Y. Manglona in the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty, and subject to the redemption laws of the CNMI. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.**

Dated this 4th day of February 2009.

/S/ SANTIAGO F. TUDELA, Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

# Business

## Obama plans to sign stimulus measure Tuesday

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Savoring his first big victory in Congress, President Barack Obama on Saturday celebrated the newly passed $787 billion economic stimulus bill as a "major milestone on our road to recovery. "

Officials said he would sign the measure on Tuesday in Denver.

Speaking in his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama said, "I will sign this legislation into law shortly, and we'll begin making the immediate investments necessary to put people back to work doing the work America needs done."

At the same time, he cautioned, "This historic step won't be the end of what we do to turn our economy around, but rather the beginning. The problems that led us into this crisis are deep and widespread, and our response must be equal to the task."

The bill passed Congress on Friday on votes split mostly along party lines, allowing Democratic leaders to deliver on their promise of clearing the legislation by mid-February. The decision to sign it Tuesday in Denver, where Democrats held their national convention last summer, was disclosed by officials on condition of anonymity. They said they were not authorized to discuss the plans.

AP

President Barack Obama delivers remarks to members of the Business Council, Friday, Feb. 13, 2009, in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

"It will take time, and it will take effort, but working together, we will turn this crisis into opportunity and emerge from our painful present into a brighter future," the president said.

Obama "now has a bill to sign that will create millions of good-paying jobs and help families and businesses stay afloat financially," said Sen. Max Baucus, a Montana Democrat who was a leading architect of the measure.

"It will shore up our schools and roads and bridges, and infuse cash into new sectors like green energy and technology that will sustain our economy for the long term," he added in a statement.

Hours earlier, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell offered a different prediction for a bill he said was loaded with wasteful spending.

"A stimulus bill that was supposed to be timely, targeted and temporary is none of the above," he said in remarks on the Senate floor. "And this means Congress is about to approve a stimulus that's unlikely to have much stimulative effect."

Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, in the GOP radio address Saturday, contended Democrats settled "on a random dollar amount in the neighborhood of $1 trillion and then set out to fill the bucket."

## Congress strengthens exec pay limits

**CHICAGO** (AP)—President Barack Obama's economic team tried to keep Democratic allies negotiating the stimulus bill from limiting paychecks for executives at banks in need of a bailout. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and economic aide Lawrence Summers failed.

Sen. Christopher Dodd, chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, inserted strict rules into the $787 billion economic stimulus package over the White House's objections. Dodd's limits on bankers' bonuses are significantly more aggressive than those sought by Obama or Geithner in recent days, with much fanfare.

Dodd, D-Conn., said the restrictions—an executive making $1 million a year in salary could receive only $500,000 in bonus money, for example—are necessary if Obama plans to ask Congress for more money to save the financial sector.

"It will never happen as long as the public perceives that there are people getting rich," Dodd said in an interview. "Save their pay or save capitalism."

That tone among Democrats flavored much of the discussion about how to write the stimulus bill, which the president planned to sign on Tuesday in Denver. Despite direct appeals from Geithner, Summers and White House officials, Democrats didn't budge, according to administration officials.

The Obama administration's proposed restrictions applied only to banks that receive "exceptional assistance" from the government. It set a $500,000 cap on pay for top executives and limited bonuses or additional compensation to restricted stock that could only be claimed after the firm had paid the government back.

## GM, Chrysler labor talks slow as deadline nears

**DETROIT** (AP)—Concession talks between the United Auto Workers and the Detroit Three shifted into an odd phase Saturday as negotiations broke off with General Motors Corp., slowed at Chrysler LLC and picked up speed at Ford Motor Co., financially the healthiest of the three, according to people briefed on the bargaining.

The developments come as GM and Chrysler race toward a Tuesday deadline to submit plans to show the government how they will become viable and repay billions in loans that are keeping them alive during the worst auto sales slump in 26 years.

Ford, which borrowed billions from private sources before credit markets tightened, has said it can make it through 2009 without government help.

The Treasury Department has committed to giving GM a total of $13.4 billion if the automaker's plan is approved. GM's plan, however, will raise the possibility that more government loans may be needed, as sales in overseas markets have deteriorated worse than expected, according to a person briefed on the plan.

## G7 finance ministers reject protectionist measures

**ROME** (AP)—The Group of Seven finance ministers pledged Saturday to avoid resorting to protectionism as they try to stimulate their own economies in the face of the world's worst economic crisis since the 1930s.

The meeting marked the international debut of U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, who assured his counterparts that President Barack Obama's $787 billion plan to resuscitate the economy, approved Friday, would not violate in any way the United States' commitment to free trade.

Geithner, who was among friends and colleagues he had worked with from his days at the Federal Bank, appealed to the "common imperative" to sustain open trade.

"These are global challenges and it is imperative that we work together to address them," Geithner told reporters afterward. "Effective global response will require sustained action by governments working with the international financial institutions."

The meeting's host, Italian Finance Minister Giulio Tremonti, affirmed "strong agreement" among the ministers on rejecting protectionism.

"It is a concrete danger, not only for economies that depend heavily on exports," he said.

Even as gloomy economic news piled up—with Europe sinking deeper into recession and the G-7 itself saying the crisis will continue at least through the end of the year—the ministers touted in their final statement "the exceptional measures" that had been "collectively taken."

The meeting was largely an affirmation of actions already being taken—from the importance of stimulus packages to the need to isolate bad assets—but the final statement didn't indicate how that would happen.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Obama to outline plan to stem home foreclosures

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—The biggest players in the mortgage industry are halting home foreclosures while the Obama administration develops its plan to help struggling homeowners. The White House said President Barack Obama on Wednesday will outline his much-anticipated plan to spend at least $50 billion to prevent foreclosures in a speech in Arizona, one of the states hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis. "It's not intended to be measured by one day's market scorekeeping, but instead to ensure that the 10,000 Americans each day that have their homes foreclosed on, and the millions more that are barely getting by, are protected," White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said Friday without providing other details. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner announced a revised effort to stabilize the financial system on Tuesday. It contained outlines of a foreclosure-relief effort, but few details.

### Report: Glaxo to cut prices for poor countries

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Drug maker GlaxoSmithKline PLC says it will cut drug prices to the 50 poorest countries in the world and use 20 percent of its profits from those countries to build health clinics and other infrastructure, according to published reports. The company's chief executive, Andrew Witty, also is proposing that drug companies, nonprofit groups and others donate their patents related to neglected tropical diseases to a common pool that could be used to speed development of new drugs, the Wall Street Journal said. Witty said prices will be cut for the poorest countries so that they are no higher than 25 percent of the price in developed countries, according to the report.

Glaxo, the second biggest drug maker by sales, generates about $43 million annually in revenue from those countries. About $1.5 million to $2.5 million would be generated for the clinics, Witty told the Journal. HIV drugs are already sold at not-for-profit prices in those countries, but the prices will be cut if the drugs aren't already sold at prices below the threshold of 25 percent, reports said. Treatments for hepatitis B, genital herpes, malaria and asthma are expected to be among those affected by the plan.

### Regulators close banks in Neb., Fla., Ill., Ore.

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Regulators on Friday closed banks based in Nebraska, Florida, Illinois and Oregon, marking 13 failures this year of federally insured institutions. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. was appointed receiver of the banks. Sherman County Bank, located in Loup City, Neb., had $129.8 million in assets and $85.1 million in deposits as of Feb. 12. Cape Coral, Fla.-based Riverside Bank of the Gulf Coast had assets of $539 million and deposits of $424 million as of Dec. 31. Corn Belt Bank and Trust Co. of Pittsfield, Ill., had total assets of $271.8 million and deposits of $234.4 million as of Dec. 31. Pinnacle Bank of Beaverton, Ore. had total assets of $73 million and deposits of $64 million as of Dec. 31. Twenty-five U.S. banks failed last year, far more than in the previous five years combined. There were just three bank failures in 2007. It's expected that many more banks won't survive this year amid rising unemployment, falling home prices and tighter credit.

# Nation

# Investigator: Plane fell flat onto Buffalo house

**CLARENCE, N.Y.** (AP)—A commuter plane that smashed into a house apparently plunged flat to the ground rather than nose-diving, ending up pointed away from the airport it was trying to reach, investigators said Saturday.

Investigators did not offer an explanation as to why the plane was pointed away from the Buffalo airport, but it does raise the possibility the pilot was fighting an icy airplane: Air safety guidelines says a pilot can try a 180-degree turn to rid a plane of ice.

Other possible explanations are that the aircraft was spinning or flipped upon impact.

Flight data showed the plane's safety systems warned the pilot that the aircraft was perilously close to losing lift and plummeting from the sky. The ensuing crash killed 49 people on the plane and one in the house.

AP

This image from television shows an aerial view of the crash site of Continental Connection Flight 3407 and the surrounding neighborhood Friday Feb. 13, 2009 in Clarence Center, N.Y.

Continental Connection Flight 3407 was cleared to land on a runway pointing to the southwest, but it crashed with its nose pointed northeast, said Steve Chealander, a National Transportation Safety Board member.

The Newark, N.J.-to-Buffalo flight didn't nose-dive into the house, as initially reported by some witnesses, Chealander said.

It will take as many as four days to remove human remains from the site, which he called an "excavation."

"Keep in mind, there's an airplane that fell on top of a house, and they're now intermingled," he said.

The plane—on its descent to Buffalo Niagara International Airport in a light snow and mist—plunged suddenly about six miles shy of the runway and exploded.

A "stick shaker" and "stick pusher" mechanism had activated to warn Capt. Marvin Renslow that the plane was about to lose aerodynamic lift, a condition called a stall. When the "stick pusher" engaged, it would have pointed the nose of the plane toward the ground to try to increase lift.

## Climate warming gases rising faster than expected

**CHICAGO** (AP)—Despite widespread concern over global warming, humans are adding carbon to the atmosphere even faster than in the 1990s, researchers warned Saturday.

Carbon dioxide and other gases added to the air by industrial and other activities have been blamed for rising temperatures, increasing worries about possible major changes in weather and climate.

Carbon emissions have been growing at 3.5 percent per year since 2000, up sharply from the 0.9 percent per year in the 1990s, Christopher Field of the Carnegie Institution for Science told the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

"It is now outside the entire envelope of possibilities" considered in the 2007 report of the International Panel on Climate Change, he said. The IPCC and former vice president Al Gore received the Nobel Prize for drawing attention to the dangers of climate change.

# Burris confirms request for Blagojevich donation

**SPRINGFIELD, Ill.** (AP)—Raising fresh questions about his appointment to Congress, Sen. Roland Burris admitted in a document released Saturday that former Gov. Rod Blagojevich's brother asked him for campaign fundraising help before the governor named Burris as Illinois' junior senator.

The disclosure reflects a major omission from Burris' testimony in January when an Illinois House impeachment committee specifically asked if he had ever spoken to Robert Blagojevich or other aides to the now-deposed governor about the Senate seat vacated by Barack Obama. State Rep. Jim Durkin, the impeachment committee's ranking Republican, told The Associated Press that he and House Republican Leader Tom Cross will ask Sunday for an outside investigation into whether Burris perjured himself.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada also said he was reviewing the disclosure, the latest twist for Senate Democrats in Washington who only consented to seat Burris on the condition that there were no "pay to play" promises exchanged in the appointment.

## ACROSS THE NATION

### Ike-damaged Galveston goes on with Mardi Gras fest

**GALVESTON, Texas** (AP)—Hundreds of revelers gathered Saturday to celebrate an annual Mardi Gras tradition in a show of support for this island ravaged by Hurricane Ike's powerful storm surge just five months ago. "I see this as a hopeful sign," said Sue Orta, a reveler from Houston who has a home on Galveston Island. "The city will recover." About 75 percent of the homes in Galveston sustained damage from Ike's 110-mph winds, rain and 12-foot storm surge when the hurricane came ashore just outside the city on Sept. 13. Revelers and some of the floats in Saturday's parade, the first of three in the celebration, paid homage to the storm. One float was decorated with the blue tarp material that still covers hundreds of roofs in the area. Phrases such as "No lights" and "No phone" and the word "Ike" with a line drawn through it were written on the float.

Some spectators wore T-shirts that read "I Survived Ike."

### NIU shooting victims mourn the dead 1 year later

**DEKALB, Ill.** (AP)—Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn joined thousands of mourners gathered at Northern Illinois University on Saturday to mark the day one year ago when a gunman fatally shot five students in a lecture hall before turning the gun on himself. School administrators, students, and friends and families of the victims attended a commemoration ceremony and a wreath laying at a planned memorial site near the still-closed Cole Hall. A candlelight vigil was planned for later Saturday. Courtney Roy, 20, visited the campus Saturday for the first time to remember childhood friend Gayle Dubowski, who was fatally shot by Steven Kazmierczak on Feb. 14, 2008. Roy joined thousands of people at the service in the university's darkened convocation center, where students on stage recited quotes from family and friends about each of the people killed. "She would've wanted me to be here," Roy said. "She always pushed me, and she's pushing me now."

### Polygamist leader quietly awaits trial in jail

**KINGMAN, Ariz.** (AP)—He's the most notorious inmate at the Mohave County Jail, segregated for the crimes he's accused of and the name he's built for himself. Most of his fellow prisoners know him from the news, though they've never seen him in person. Polygamist sect leader Warren Jeffs was brought to the Arizona jail nearly a year ago, far from his followers, to await trial on four counts of being an accomplice to sexual conduct with a minor. The charges stem from two arranged marriages between teenage girls and their older male relatives. But Jeffs' journey through the justice system won't end here. As he awaits his day in an Arizona court, Texas is building an unrelated case against him, and he's already been convicted in Utah. For now, though, his life is a 7-by-12-foot cell where he spends his days poring over religious material and talking with attorneys over what lies ahead.


Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
**Board of Parole**
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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Board of Parole Office and pursuant to Public Law B-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992", Notice is hereby given that a **Parole Hearing** is scheduled for **February 18, 2009, (Wednesday) beginning at 9:00 a.m., and, if need be, to continue on February 19, 2009, (Thursday) at 9:00 a.m. at the Vicente Taman Seman Building, Department of Corrections Briefing/Training Room**, Susupe, Saipan. The following items are included in the agenda:

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Presence of Quorum

II. Consent Items
1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Adoption of Parole Hearing Minutes - May 21, 2009

| III. Parole Application | BOP No. | Criminal Case No. |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Alex Alfonso Augustine | 07-019 | 06-0239B |
| 2. Benjamin John John | 08-008 | 07-0071(E) |
| 3. Wang Tao | 08-009 | 06-0196B |
| 4. Joseph Acosta Crisostimo | 08-012 | 07-147C |
| 5. Raymond Basa Blas | 08-014 | 04-809 |
| 6. David Manglona Atatig | 08-015 | 06-0098E |
| 7. Pedro Omar | 09-001 | 02-0339C |

| IV. Re-Application | BOP No. | Criminal Case No. |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Joaquin S. Peredo | 08-RA-005 | 04-lSlC |

V. Miscellaneous Parole Matters
VI. Adjournment

If you have any question, please call the Parole Office at telephone number 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Ramon B. Camacho
Chairman, Board of Parole
January 23, 2009
Date



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
**BOARD OF PAROLE**
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**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL MEDIA SERVICES**

Date Submitted: **January 29, 2009**
Date the announcement is to go on the **NEWS:** From: **02/02/09 & 02/16/09**
How many Times to go on the **News:** **Two Time: 02/02/09 & 02/16/09**

**MESSAGE:** Governor Benigno R. Fitial an Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Board of Parole Office, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992". Notice is hereby given that a Parole Hearing is scheduled for **February 18, 2009, (Wednesday)** beginning at **9:00 a.m., and if need be, to continue on February 19, 2009, (Thursday) at 9:00 a.m.** at the **Vicente Taman Seman Building, Department of Corrections Briefing/Training Room**, Susupe, Saipan. The following items are included in the agenda:

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If you have any question, please call the Parole Office at telephone number 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Ramond B. Camacho
Chairman, Board of Parole
January 14, 2009

# Asia

# Migrants endure brutal trips to leave Bangladesh

**TEKNAF, Bangladesh** (AP)—When night falls, the man told him, head for the boats.

The trip would be easy, the man said. Four days on a ship to Thailand, then a short trek through forested hills to Malaysia. Then you're in the money.

Instead, Mohammed Sharif found himself captive in the boat's hold with nearly 100 others, eating only rice and water while the crew threatened beatings and the boat drifted for weeks in the sun, lost at sea.

The 26-year-old taxi driver had fallen prey to a network of human traffickers that has emerged in Bangladesh's coastal communities to serve a growing pool of customers willing to risk their lives to reach wealthier shores.

The fate of migrants on the illegal route from Bangladesh to Thailand has sparked international outrage. Allegations surfaced last month that Thailand forced nearly 1,000 migrants back to sea in boats with no engines and only a few bags of rice. Hundreds drowned.

Many of the migrants leaving Bangladesh are Rohingyas, members of a stateless Muslim ethnic group that originally fled from Myanmar to escape persecution. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas live in Bangladesh.

Thai authorities caught 1,025 Rohingya migrants in 2006, 2,700 in 2007 and then nearly 5,000 last year, according to the Bangkok-based Arakan Project, which advocates on behalf of the Rohingyas. Most of those were believed to have been headed for Malaysia.

Thai military officials have repeatedly denied they forced migrants out to sea, insisting they only detain and then repatriate them. But Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has said authorities are investigating the charges.

Indian authorities rescued more than 300 migrants in late December and early January and are holding them in the Andaman Islands. Indonesian authorities are holding roughly 200 migrants who washed up on Sabang island.

## *Rohingya are outcasts, not welcome anywhere*

**BANGKOK, Thailand** (AP)—For generations, the ethnic Muslim Rohingya have endured persecution by the ruling junta of Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country.

The plight of the Rohingya, descendants of Arab traders from the 7th century, gained international attention over the past month after five boatloads of haggard migrants were found in the waters around Indonesia and the Andaman Islands.

But unlike the Kurds or the Palestinians, no one has championed the cause of the Rohingya. Most countries, from Saudi Arabia to Malaysia, see them as little more than a source of cheap labor for the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs.

"The Rohingya are probably the most friendless people in the world. They just have no one advocating for them at all," said Kitty McKinsey, a spokeswoman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. "Hardly any of them have legal status anywhere in the world."

There are an estimated 750,000 Rohingya living in Myanmar's mountainous northern state of Rakhine, which borders Bangladesh. Thousands flee every year, trying to escape a life of abuse that was codified in 1982 with a law that virtually bars them from becoming citizens.

A spokesman for Myanmar's military government did not respond to an e-mailed request for comment. It has repeatedly denied abusing the Rohingya, though Amnesty International said the junta has described them as less than human. Rights groups have documented widespread abuses, including forced labor, land seizures and rape.

"It was like living in hell," said Mohamad Zagit, who left after soldiers confiscated his family's rice farm and then threw him in jail for praying at a local mosque. The 23-year-old spoke from his hospital bed in Thailand, where he had been detained after fleeing Myanmar.

"We have no rights," said Muhamad Shafirullah, who was among 200 migrants rescued by the Indonesian navy last week. He recalled how he was jailed in Myanmar, his family's land stolen and a cousin dragged into the jungle and shot dead. "They rape and kill our women. We can't practice our religion. We aren't allowed to travel from village to village ... It's almost impossible, even, to get married or go to school."

AP

Muhammad Syafirullah, one of Rohingya boat people rescued by Acehnese fishermen lies on a hospital bed in Idi rayeuk, Aceh province, Indonesia, Thursday, Feb. 5, 2009.

# Australian wildfire victims mourned at church

**WHITTLESEA, Australia** (AP)—Australians mourned the victims of deadly wildfires at Sunday church services across the country, as news emerged of a class action lawsuit against a power company over the cause of one of the blazes.

More than 180 people were killed and 1,800 homes destroyed when some 400 blazes tore across Victoria state on Feb. 7 in Australia's worst-ever wildfire disaster. Police have arrested one man on arson charges connected to one fire and suspect foul play in at least one other.

A law firm lodged a suit in Victoria's Supreme Court against power supplier SP Ausnet alleging negligence for allowing an overhead power line to fall, starting a wildfire, The Age newspaper reported.

SP Ausnet was not immediately available to comment on the report.

Residents of towns in the 1,500-square mile (3,900-square kilometer) fire zone gathered at church services Sunday to pray for the dead and seek comfort from each other. The scene was repeated at churches across the country, which has been deeply shocked by the tragedy.

At Whittlesea, a town about 60 miles (100 kilometers) north of the state capital of Melbourne, about 200 people attended the Whittlesea Christ Church for services led by the Archbishop of Melbourne, Philip Freier, and Governor General Quentin Bryce.

Whittlesea has become a center for relief efforts for neighboring towns such as Kinglake, where scores of people died and which was almost completely destroyed.

# Suspected US missile strike kills 27 in Pakistan

**ISLAMABAD** (AP)—Dozens of followers of Pakistan's top Taliban commander were in a compound when a suspected U.S. missile attack hit, killing 27 militants in an al-Qaida stronghold near the Afghan border, intelligence officials said.

Later Saturday, a Chinese engineer held by Taliban militants since August was set free, officials said. The terms of his release were not immediately clear, but it was a rare bit of good news following the apparent beheading of a Polish kidnap victim and threats to kill an American U.N. official held separately.

The missile strike appeared to be the deadliest yet by the American drone aircraft that prowl the frontier, and defied Pakistani warnings that the tactic is fueling extremism in the nuclear-armed Islamic nation.

In an interview unrelated to the attack, President Asif Ali Zardari said the Taliban had expanded their presence to a "huge amount" of Pakistan and were even eyeing a takeover of the state.

"We're fighting for the survival of Pakistan. We're not fighting for the survival of anybody else," Zardari said, according to a transcript of his remarks that CBS television said it would air Sunday.

Many Pakistanis believe the country is fighting Islamist militants, who have enjoyed state support in the past, only at Washington's behest.

Remotely piloted U.S. aircraft are believed to have launched more than 30 attacks over the past year, and American officials say al-Qaida's leadership and ability to support the insurgency in Afghanistan has been significantly weakened. But Pakistani officials say the vast majority of the victims are civilians.

After Saturday's strike, Taliban fighters surrounded the flattened compound in the village of Shrawangai Nazarkhel and carried away the dead and wounded in several vehicles. The village is in South Waziristan, part of the tribally governed area along the Afghan frontier considered the likely redoubt of al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden.

## ASIAN BRIEFS

### RP president grateful that US stimulus bill also compensates Filipino WWII veterans

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo says the stimulus bill that seeks to revive the U.S. economy will also give justice to thousands of aging Filipino World War II veterans. Arroyo says the US$787 billion stimulus package approved by the U.S. Congress Friday contained provisions recognizing and compensating Filipino veterans who fought under the American flag when the Philippines was still an American colony. She said in a statement Saturday that the U.S. Congress voted to "correct a historic wrong" and incorporated a lump sum for the veterans. Hawaii Sen. Daniel Inouye, a longtime supporter of Filipino veterans, has said the stimulus measure sets aside US$198 million for one-time payments for Filipino veterans.

### US envoy meets Afghan president amid tensions

**KABUL** (AP)—President Barack Obama's new envoy to Afghanistan met with President Hamid Karzai on Saturday amid a downturn in U.S.-Afghan relations and an upswing in militant violence. Karzai says he still has not spoken with Obama almost a month after his inauguration, a sign the Afghan president no longer enjoys the favored status he had under former President George W. Bush. "There is tension between us and the U.S. government on issues of civilian casualties, arrests of Afghans, nightly raids on homes and the casualties they cause," Karzai told al-Jazeera television in an interview Friday. Obama has said the U.S. will increase its attention on Afghanistan under his tenure as the U.S. transitions out of Iraq. But the administration is still debating how to stem the Taliban tide and tackle the endemic corruption in Karzai's government more than seven years after the 2001 invasion. Taliban militants have increased attacks and swept up wide areas of countryside over the last three years. The U.S. is contemplating sending up to 30,000 more American forces to back up the 33,000 already in Afghanistan.

### Sri Lanka military says rebels attack refugee bus

**COLOMBO, Sri Lanka** (AP)—A suspected Tamil Tiger rebel hurled a hand grenade at a bus full of war-displaced refugees Saturday, killing a woman and wounding 13 others, the military said. The bus was attacked in Puliyankulam village in the north while transporting people who had fled the embattled region for government territory, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said. Rebel officials could not be contacted for comment. The military's claim could not be independently verified because independent journalists are barred from the war zone. A 59-year-old woman was killed and the wounded included four children, Nanayakkara said. The government has accused the Tigers—who have recently lost their main strongholds to government forces and are cornered in a small sliver of coastal land—of holding scores of people as human shields and killing civilians who want to escape. The rebels have denied the allegations.

# World

# Saudi king shakes up religious establishment

**RIYADH, Saudi Arabia** (AP)—The Saudi king on Saturday dismissed the chief of the religious police and a cleric who condoned killing the owners of TV networks that broadcast "immoral" content, signaling an effort to weaken the country's hard-line Sunni establishment.

The shake-up—King Abdullah's first since coming to power in August 2005—included the appointment of a female deputy minister, the highest government position a Saudi woman has attained.

The king also changed the makeup of an influential body of religious scholars, for the first time giving more moderate Sunnis representation to the group whose duties include issuing the religious edicts known as fatwas.

Saudi Arabia's king does not have unlimited power. He has to take into account the sentiments of the sprawling ruling family as well as that of the powerful religious establishment, which helped found the state nearly a century ago.

Abdullah's changes indicate that he has built the necessary support and consensus in the religious elite and in the ruling family.

The religious establishment has come under persistent criticism, in particular because of the actions of the judiciary and the religious police. Agents of the moral police are responsible for ensuring women are covered and men go to mosques for prayer, among other things, but many Saudis say they exploit their broad mandate to interfere in people's lives.

The changes help to dilute the influence that hard-liners have had for decades. The king, who has promoted moderation and interfaith dialogue, has brought in a group of relatively young officials and scholars.

"This is the true start of the promises of reform," said Jamal Khashoggi, editor of Al-Watan newspaper and an experienced observer of the kingdom's politics. "They bring not only new blood, but also new ideas,"

"They are more moderate and many are also close to the reform agenda of the king, having worked closely with him."

The delay in making these changes could also be in part because the necessary officials and scholars had to be trained for the job.

"The people now in charge are not being ordered to implement reform," Khashoggi added. "They believe in reform."

New judges were also named and the Consultative Council—the closest thing the kingdom has to a parliament—was reshuffled.

AP

A Saudi woman is seen outside a mosque in the Saudi capital Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009.

## Former Gitmo guard recalls abuse, climate of fear

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico** (AP)—Army Pvt. Brandon Neely was scared when he took Guantanamo's first shackled detainees off a bus. Told to expect vicious terrorists, he grabbed a trembling, elderly detainee and ground his face into the cement—the first of a range of humiliations he says he participated in and witnessed as the prison was opening for business.

Neely has now come forward in this final year of the detention center's existence, saying he wants to publicly air his feelings of guilt and shame about how some soldiers behaved as the military scrambled to handle the first alleged al-Qaida and Taliban members arriving at the isolated U.S. Navy base.

His account, one of the first by a former guard describing abuses at Guantanamo, describes a chaotic time when soldiers lacked clear rules for dealing with detainees who were denied many basic comforts. He says the circumstances changed quickly once monitors from the International Committee of the Red Cross arrived.

The military says it has gone to great lengths in the seven years since then to ensure the prisoners' safe treatment. "Our policy is to treat detainees humanely," said Navy Cmdr. Jeffrey Gordon, a Pentagon spokesman.

After the Sept. 11 attacks and the swift U.S. military response in Afghanistan, the Bush administration had little time to prepare for the hundreds of prisoners being swept up on the battlefield. The U.S. Southern Command was given only a few weeks notice before they began arriving at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba—a locale thought to be beyond the reach of U.S. and Cuban law. The first arrivals were housed in cages that had been used for Haitian migrants almost a decade earlier.

Now President Barack Obama is committed to closing the prison and finding new ways of handling the remaining 245 detainees as well as any future terror suspects. Human rights groups say his pledge to adhere to long established laws and treaties governing prisoner treatment is essential if the United States hopes to prevent abuses in the future.

## Israel links truce with Hamas to soldier's release

**JERUSALEM** (AP)—Israel's outgoing prime minister on Saturday ruled out a long-term truce in Gaza without the release of an Israeli soldier held in the Hamas-ruled territory—a sign that a month of negotiations may have stalled.

Egypt has been mediating indirect cease-fire talks between Israel and Hamas since Israel unilaterally halted its fierce three-week offensive in Gaza. Under an emerging truce deal, Israel would gradually ease its border blockade of Gaza, in exchange for a halt to weapons smuggling and attacks by Gaza militants.

In parallel, Egypt also brokered talks on a prisoner swap—hundreds of Palestinians held by Israel in exchange for Gilad Schalit, the Israeli soldier seized by Hamas-allied militants in June 2006. Progress has been reported in those negotiations, with the remaining dispute apparently focusing on several prisoners involved in particularly bloody attacks on Israelis.

Hamas has sought to separate the truce deal from the prisoner swap. However, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Saturday said the two were inextricably linked.

"The position of the prime minister is that Israel will not reach any understandings regarding the calm (cease-fire) before the release of Gilad Schalit," said a statement by Olmert's office.

In Gaza, Hamas officials also reported new snags.

Hamas wants a cease-fire for 18 months, with the possibility of extending it. Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum and Hamas legislator Salah Bardawil said Israel has renewed demands for an open-ended cease-fire.

Barhoum said Hamas drafted its final version of a truce deal and presented it to Egypt. "Israel returned (it) to ask for an open-ended calm without a ceiling," he said, adding that Egypt is trying to bridge the gap.

Egypt is also key to a third set of complex negotiations.

Starting Feb. 22, it will host reconciliation talks between Hamas and the rival Fatah movement of moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Hamas wrested control of Gaza from forces loyal to Abbas in June 2007. In response, Abbas fired the Hamas-led government and set up a rival administration in the West Bank.

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Can Chavez run again? Venezuelans decide in vote

**CARACAS, Venezuela** (AP)—Venezuelans were deciding President Hugo Chavez's future on Sunday in a referendum that could end term limits, a prospect Chavez says is key to his socialist project but that critics warn would distort democracy. On the eve of the vote, Chavez—first elected in 1998—said the proposed constitutional amendment would deepen democracy by letting voters choose the officials they want. He shrugged off opposition talk of dictatorship, pointing out that Franklin Roosevelt was elected U.S. president four times. "Ten years is nothing. I don't know what they're complaining about," he said. Without a constitutional amendment, Chavez will have to leave office in 2013. He lost a broader referendum in December 2007 that also sought to abolish presidential term limits, and says nothing is stopping him from trying again if he loses this time. Chavez says he needs the amendment to seek reelection in 2012 and complete Venezuela's transition to socialism.

### Murder trial in Italy: US student had a scratch

**PERUGIA, Italy** (AP)—An American student accused in the stabbing death of her British roommate had a scratch on her neck hours after the killing, a witness testified Saturday at the murder trial in Italy. Prosecutors allege Meredith Kercher was the reluctant object of a sex game that ended violently on Nov. 1, 2007 when the British woman was fatally stabbed in the neck. Laura Mezzetti, an Italian who shared an apartment with Kercher and defendant Amanda Knox, told the court she saw the scratch on Knox's neck, below her chin, the following day at the police station where they were waiting to be questioned but said she didn't point it out at the time because she thought investigators would notice themselves. "I noticed it because it was known that Meredith had been killed by a wound to her neck," Mezzetti told the court. "I was afraid that Amanda, too, might have been wounded, I was worried and I looked at it really intensely."

### US supplies via Russia to start soon

**MOSCOW** (AP)—The shipment of U.S. military supplies for Afghanistan through Russia will begin soon, news agencies quoted Russia's foreign minister as saying Saturday. "The transit will take place literally within days," Sergey Lavrov told TV Tsentr, according to the Interfax, ITAR-Tass and RIA-Novosti agencies. Foreign Ministry officials could not be reached for comment late Saturday, and the reports did not say whether the supplies would transit Russia by land or air. However, Russia announced last week that it would allow U.S. shipments of non-lethal military supplies to Afghanistan. Supply routes to Afghanistan for the U.S.-led international military operation have become an increasingly critical issue in recent months amid growing militant attacks on the land routes through Pakistan that carry about 75 percent of U.S. supplies. The U.S. plans to send around 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan this year. Concerns rose further this month when Kyrgyzstan's president announced that the Central Asian country intends to evict a U.S. military base that is an important transit point for Afghanistan-bound troops and supplies.

## Zimbabwe PM: Aide's arrest undermines unity govt

**HARARE, Zimbabwe** (AP)—Zimbabwe's new prime minister said Saturday he must work with longtime President Robert Mugabe to try to reverse his country's economic collapse, despite signs that factions in the Mugabe camp want to bring down the new coalition government.

Morgan Tsvangirai told The Associated Press the arrest of his aide Roy Bennett, who was to be sworn in as the deputy minister of agriculture, was an attempt to destroy the unity agreement.

Bennett was detained by police Friday while Tsvangirai and Mugabe were presiding over the inauguration of senior Cabinet ministers. Bennett, a well-known white lawmaker fluent in the local Shona language, had his coffee farm in eastern Zimbabwe seized years ago by ruling party supporters.

A pro-Mugabe newspaper resurrected a long-discredited claim Saturday, reporting that Bennett was arrested because of an alleged plot from 2006 to overthrow Mugabe. Tsvangirai's party said police told them Bennett would be charged with treason, which carries the death penalty.

Late Saturday, the party said lawyers had been able to see Bennett, and that he had released a statement through them: "Whatever these challenges, if we remain unwaveringly dedicated, we will achieve peace, freedom and democracy in our life time—believe me."

A deep gulf of mistrust resides between Mugabe's ZANU-PF party and Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change party, bitter rivals pressured to work together by neighboring countries after disputed elections led to a political impasse.

# Health & Fitness

## New video games for children provide workouts in disguise

By LORI ARATANI
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

THE WASHINGTON POST

Demetrius Stoner-Williams of the Alexandria, Va., YMCA helps Mahalia Giesselmann, 8, with a wireless belt for the Trazer Soccer Goalie game. The Alexandria YMCA is one of the first in the D.C. area to pilot an "I-gym"—a workout room filled with equipment that combines video games with fitness.

**WASHINGTON**—As they try to get children off their couches and onto their feet, schools and gyms across the country are harnessing some of the same technology often blamed for making kids fat: video games.

The Alexandria, Va., YMCA is one of the first in this area to pilot an "I-gym"—a workout room filled with about a dozen pieces of equipment that marry video games and fitness. Think of it as Nintendo's Wii on steroids. In Silver Spring, Md., Woodlin Elementary School has tried out a NEOS, a giant orange play structure with flashing lights, colors and "whoop whoop" sounds.

"Kids are going to exercise if they want to and have fun doing it," said Janice Williams, senior vice president for special projects at the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington. "So many kids are tech savvy, and video games are a draw to them, so why not have them use a video game that requires them to use movement?"

The effort does not come inexpensively. But here and at schools and in communities elsewhere, the investment reflects growing anxiety about the health and fitness of a generation of children who are heavier and could suffer more health problems than their parents and grandparents. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 9 million—or 16 percent—of young people between the ages of 6 and 19 are overweight by the agency's standards, triple the number in 1980. But efforts to combat the problem over the past decade have made little progress in reducing waistlines.

That's why YMCA officials have decided to go digital.

The equipment in Alexandria allows students to "snowboard" without the chill and "drive" all-terrain vehicles without the mud. The students might not realize it, but all that pedaling, balancing and hopping is boosting their heart rates and making them sweat, said Inez Edwards, association director of youth wellness for the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington.

Incorporating electronics into exercise equipment is not completely new. Many gyms and schools have adopted versions of Dance Dance Revolution, an electronic game that challenges players to follow dance steps displayed on a video screen into their fitness programs. Nintendo's Wii, a video game system that encourages movement, has been a hit in schools and senior centers.

But the equipment at the Alexandria YMCA is even more sophisticated. Edwards pointed to two kids "snowboarding" down the side of the mountain. They weren't just having fun: They were working their core muscles as they attempted to balance while steering, she said.

"You're getting so engaged, you don't want to stop," said Mike Hansen, chief executive officer of iTech Fitness, which manufactures the equipment being used at the YMCA. "Kids don't give you that much time. They want instant gratification, which is what these machines do."

Hansen said the equipment is popular with gyms and YMCAs. Some hospital groups have also expressed interest in the machines. Sales have also grown internationally: Hansen said his company has a deal with a chain of fitness clubs in South Korea.

Because the machines have started to pop up in gyms and local schools only recently, there is little independent analysis of whether this equipment is more effective at holding young people's attention longer, whether it provides more fitness benefits than traditional equipment and whether the outcome is worth the significant investment required to build a digital playground.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Marrae Pierce, left, and Christian Little, both 7, play an "extreme snowboard" video game, which gives their core muscles a workout as they balance while steering.

THE WASHINGTON POST

At the Alexandria, Va., YMCA, youngsters get in the rhythm of the Dance Dance Revolution video game. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 16 percent of young people between the ages of 6 and 19 are overweight, triple the number in 1980.

## Why exercise is good for the eyes

By JEANNINE STEIN
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

We all know that exercise makes for a stronger heart and reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes and a number of other conditions. But now there's more to add to the list: Vigorous exercise also may help prevent age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, both of which can affect vision.

Two new studies looked at data from almost eight years of follow-up from the National Runners' Health Study. In one, 110 men and 42 women received a clinical diagnosis of age-related macular degeneration during the follow-up. The more the runners ran, the less risk they had for developing age-related macular degeneration. Running an average of two to four kilometers a day reduced the risk by 19 percent, and running more than four kilometers per day reduced the risk by 42 percent to 54 percent, compared with those who ran less than two kilometers a day. Running an extra kilometer per day was associated with a 10 percent decrease in relative risk. Numbers were adjusted for age, sex, diet and smoking history.

Another study examined the effects of running on developing cataracts. Among the same group of runners, 733 men and 179 women reported having cataracts during the follow-up. Men who ran had a lower risk of cataracts, even after adjusting for body mass index. Those who ran 64 or more kilometers a week had a 35 percent lower cataract risk than those who ran less than 16 kilometers per week. And those with better cardiovascular fitness were also at less risk than men who were less fit.

Although it's not fully known why a link exists between fitness and preventing these conditions, study author Paul T. Williams, a staff scientist with the Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, believes that exercise could provide similar protective benefits for the eyes as it does for the heart and other systems.

"There are overlaps," he says. Higher levels of HDL (good) cholesterol are associated with a lower risk of age-related macular degeneration. Also, C-reactive protein, which shows higher levels during inflammation, may contribute to cataracts. Exercise typically boosts levels of HDL cholesterol and lowers levels of C-reactive protein.

The study appeared in the January issue of Investigative Ophthamology & Visual Science.

## Heart month; benefit for moderate drinkers

By LINDSAY MINNEMA
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

February has heart—candy hearts, heart balloons, Valentine's hearts and more. But as American Heart Month, February also is the month to remember the most important heart of all—the one that keeps you alive. Here's a reminder from the American College of Emergency Physicians of the key symptoms of a heart attack:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness or a squeezing sensation in the corner of the chest, lasting several minutes
- Discomfort that spreads to the shoulders, neck, jaw, arms or back
- Light-headedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath

If you notice any of these warning signs, don't hesitate. Call 911. The American Heart Association also recommends taking aspirin, which can slow the development of a clot. For more, visit www.americanheart.org.

■■■

A new study from researchers at the University of Minnesota brings new meaning to the term couch potato. According to their findings, high school kids who watch too much TV are more likely to have bad eating habits five years later.

The impact was especially profound when kids were transitioning from adolescence to young adulthood—a critical developmental period wherein lifelong behaviors are formed. Kids who watched more than five hours of TV per day ate fewer fruits, vegetables and whole grains and more snack foods, fried foods and trans fats years later. So encourage your kids to put down that remote and find new, healthier activities to occupy their free time.

## Ice baths can be life-savers for overheated athletes

By SHARI ROAN
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

A Kentucky high school football coach was arraigned in January on charges of reckless homicide after a player under his supervision collapsed and died on a hot day last August.

Now a review published in the Journal of Athletic Training provides needed information on the best way to treat athletes, or anyone working in extreme heat, who suffer heat-related illnesses. The study, an analysis of other research on the condition, concludes that people who are clearly suffering from exercise-induced hyperthermia should be immersed in ice water or cold water as quickly as possible, even before being taken to a hospital.

If a place to immerse the person, such as an ice tub, kiddie pool or swimming pool, is not available, try to have a large cooler with ice, water and towels on hand. Cold, wet towels should be placed all over the person's body and changed every two to three minutes. The study found that placing wet towels or ice bags on certain parts of the body are not nearly as effective. "The athlete should be treated first and transported second," the study's lead author, Brendon McDermott of the University of Connecticut, said in an interview. "The cells are being cooked, and the outcome depends on how long the temperature is elevated."

# Life & Style

## Conan O'Brien packing up for move West

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Nearly two dozen guitars are scattered on the floor and sofa in Conan O'Brien's office in Rockefeller Center, most of them gifts from musicians like Eddie Van Halen, Los Lobos, Les Paul and Brian Setzer.

Moving day approaches.

O'Brien is about to pack up the guitars—and himself—for the trip West, when he replaces Jay Leno as host of NBC's "Tonight" show in June. First things first, though, as a nostalgic O'Brien prepares for the last week of his 16-year run at "Late Night." Feb. 20 is his last show before turning it over to Jimmy Fallon.

He usually enters his office from the Sixth Avenue side, where Rockefeller Plaza is indistinguishable from any other New York office building. Lately, though, he has looped around to the Fifth Avenue side, walking past the skating rink into the far more impressive eastern entrance.

"For a while, I was in denial—`Oh, we'll just stop doing this show and we'll move on to the next one,'" he says. "That's very me, very male. Men don't like to say goodbye. My wife told me about six months ago: 'I think you have to admit that you have mixed feelings about leaving this late-night show, it's very emotionally charged for you. That's OK.'"

He's been sifting through show highlights from over the years, playing "greatest hits" clips during the last few weeks. Many are suggestions from viewers.

The other night he watched his very first show for the first time in years.

That was a pretty emotionally charged time, too. As an unknown chosen to replace David Letterman in 1993, he was brutally panned and nearly fired. Given the chance, he improved to the point where those bad days are a distant memory.

AP

In this Nov. 7, 2007 file photo, Conan O'Brien is shown in New York.

From the very beginning, he says, it was the show he wanted to do. Even recent Conan converts would recognize some of the humor from that first show: He's depicted walking down a street where a talking horse calls out to him "Better be as good as Letterman." He sang "Edelweiss" hand-in-hand with Tony Randall as the camera cut to a crying Nazi in the audience.

"I'm proud of the show's originality," he says. "Letterman's `Late Night' was obviously brilliant and groundbreaking and changed all of the rules and I'm very proud of the fact that our show, in its tone and its look and its approach had very little to do with the show that came before it or, I think, any other show that came before it."

Unpredictability and a childlike silliness were its defining characteristics.

His "clutch cargo," or fake interviews with pictures that had moving lips, also showed up during the very first week. He traveled to Finland to "take over" the country. He drove around Houston at 2:40 a.m. to see what was going on at that hour—the time his show was carried by the local NBC affiliate. At the late hour of his telecast—most NBC stations carried him at 12:35 a.m.—a surreal sketch in which O'Brien stripped his shirt to impersonate Led Zeppelin frontman Robert Plant, then morphed into a medieval sword fight with George Plimpton, made some kind of sense.

NBC had committed to giving him the "Tonight" slot five years ago, although it was only recently that current host Jay Leno decided to stay with the network and do a nightly 10 p.m. show.

Most of O'Brien's writers will head to California with him. Years ago, switching to that earlier time slot might have meant dramatically changing the tone of the show to appeal to an older audience. But the late-night habits of viewers are different now—many watch the next day on digital video recorders—and the need for such changes has lessened.

"The shows are an extension of the host and, like it or not, this is my sense of humor," O'Brien says. "It would be a mistake to reinvent myself as a completely different person now."

## Fallon breaking in the 'Late Night' chair

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Jimmy Fallon says he's sat in the "Late Night" chair.

Fallon talked excitedly Friday about his upcoming gig hosting NBC's "Late Night" from the front row at the Rag & Bone presentation at New York Fashion Week.

"I sat in my actual chair tonight," said Fallon, who takes over March 2 for Conan O'Brien.

Sporting a cozy-yet-stylish gray sweater, the 34-year-old said preparations are well under way: "We're writing monologues, writing guest pieces (and) building the set," he said.

While Fallon settles in, O'Brien heads to Los Angeles to replace Jay Leno as "Tonight Show" host in June, with Leno moving to a 10 p.m. slot

Fallon is mum about the debut's guest lineup. "We got 'em," he teased. "We got the first show. It's gonna be good."

AP

Actor Jimmy Fallon attends the Rag and Bone fall 2009 collection show during Fashion Week Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 in New York.

## Mexico City sets kissing record on Valentine's Day

**MEXICO CITY** (AP)—Mexico City puckered up to set a new record Saturday as nearly 40,000 people locked lips in the city center for the world's largest group kiss.

Carlos Martinez of Guinness World Records verified the record of 39,897 people who entered the gated kissing area of the city's Zocalo main square on Valentine's Day, besting Weston-super-Mare, an English town that set the previous kissing record in 2007.

"We did it! Long live Mexico," said Mexican singer-actress Susana Zavaleta, who serenaded the crowd before the kiss with the classic Mexican ballad, "Besame Mucho," or "Kiss Me a Lot"—also the name of the event.

The Valentine's Day kiss was meant to show love at a time when a crackdown against drug traffickers has led to widespread violence across the country. At least 6,000 people died in drug-related conflicts in 2008.

"More than 35,000 will simultaneously kiss to show that warmth and love are at the core of this capital, the heart of the Mexican Republic," the city's tourism department, which organized the gathering, said in a statement.

The event "is aimed at changing people's attitudes toward human relations, especially between couples, so that respect, equity and tolerance are at the center of any relationship," the statement said.

AP

Couples kiss in Mexico City, Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009. Thousands gathered in Mexico City's central plaza to pucker up for peace and break the world record for the largest number of people kissing at one time.

The giant Zocalo, which can hold 100,000 people, was half-filled as mostly young couples embraced and held one another in a lip lock for 10 seconds.

The kiss was delayed for several hours as organizers waited for people to gather.

As the crowd grew, city workers in cupid wings offered hugs, teenage boys carried signs volunteering their kissing services and couples practiced openly in a country that surprises many with its pervasive public displays of affection.

"We love demonstrating our love in front of everyone and in front of our family," said Lucia Gutierrez, 38, who spent the afternoon rehearsing with Vicente Romero, 34, her boyfriend of 10 months. "There's nothing bad about showing your love."

Benito Zavala, 53, who works in a store nearby, said he didn't have time to go home to get his wife. So he planned to help set the record with his 2-year-old Chihuahua, Onix, who was licking his lips.

"It's a good idea because a lot of people feel the need to share their affection," Zavala said. "They already do it in the Metro, in the street, so I think it's best if they all do it together."

The event also included workshops on violence-free relationships and AIDS prevention.

As soon as the kissing stopped, participants started chanting "Cente!" the nickname for Mexico's most popular ranchera singer, Vicente Fernandez, who followed the smooch-fest with a free concert.

# 'The Milk of Sorrow' wins at Berlin festival

**BERLIN** (AP)—Director Claudia Llosa's "The Milk of Sorrow," a film that addresses the fears of women abused during Peru's turbulent recent history, won the Berlin film festival's top Golden Bear award on Saturday.

The movie stars Magaly Solier as Fausta, a young woman suffering from a mysterious illness that is said to be transferred through the milk of mothers who were raped or physically abused during Peruvian authorities' long war against leftist guerrillas.

The Spanish-Peruvian co-production is Llosa's second feature film.

"This is beautiful ... this is such an honor," Llosa said after receiving the award. "This is for Peru. This is for our country."

"We need this kind of prize," she said at a later news conference. "It is important to us that people get to know our films."

The festival's jury grand prize, which comes with a runner-up Silver Bear, was shared Saturday by two films.

Argentine director Adrian Biniez' debut feature "Gigante" tells the story of a supermarket security guard who falls in love with a cleaner, while German director Maren Ade's "Everyone Else" follows a couple during a difficult vacation.

Iran's Asghar Farhadi was chosen as best director for "About Elly," which looks at thirtysomething Iranians' attitudes to life.

Sotigui Kouyate was named best actor for his part in director Rachid Bouchareb's "London River." He plays a French Muslim desperately awaiting news of his son after the 2005 terrorist attacks in London.

Birgit Minichmayr won the best actress honor for her role as half of the awkward couple in "Everyone Else."

The best script award went to Oren Moverman and Alessandro Camon for "The Messenger," in which Woody Harrelson and Ben Foster star as U.S. Army officers responsible for informing families about the deaths of soldiers. Moverman also directed the film.

The award for an outstanding artistic contribution went to Gabor Erdely and Tamas Szekely for what the jury called the "sound design" of "Katalin Varga," from British director Peter Strickland.

Two movies shared the festival's honor for innovative film making: Biniez' "Gigante" and "Sweet Rush," the latest film from Polish veteran Andrzej Wajda.

The winners were chosen from a field of 18 movies by a seven-member international jury under British actress Tilda Swinton.

"The Milk of Sorrow" is the second consecutive Latin American winner in Berlin. Last year's Golden Bear went to Brazilian director Jose Padilha's "The Elite Squad."

AP

Actress Birgit Minichmayr from Austria reacts during a photo-call with the Silver Bear as best actress in the movie "Alle Anderen" at the Berlinale in Berlin, Germany, Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009.

# *Future-perfect*: NY *Fashion Week goes space-age*

**NEW YORK** (AP)—The present looks bleak for the fashion industry, so designers at Fashion Week have a solution: the future.

Space-age materials and clothes with jutting hips and shoulders made a Jetsons-like splash on Saturday at New York Fashion Week.

Even Barbie, celebrating her 50th birthday, got in on the act. A fashion show with 50 designs inspired by the doll closed with a series of futuristic dresses including a white Calvin Klein dress with cut-out shoulders. Heidi Klum sat in the front row, looking a bit like the plastic muse.

Georges Chakra used liquidy, high-tech fabrics with sharp Jane Jetson shapes, continuing a trend seen in the early going of New York Fashion Week.

BCBG relied on asymmetrical necklines and shoulder pads—yes, they may be back—and put models in metallic tights, which at the right angle on their ultra-thin legs could remind an observer of C-3PO from "Star Wars."

Nicole Miller embraced a space-age look that's a little more '60s than futuristic, shown best in a black vest with an in-your-face shoulder flange worn over a slim black stretch dress.

And that projecting shoulder might offset another recurring sight: peplum pants, with fabric that juts out at the hips.

More than 100 designers are presenting their fall collections at New York Fashion Week, which runs through Friday.

AP

The fall 2009 collection of BCBG Max Azria is modeled during Fashion Week in Bryant Park, Friday, Feb. 13, 2009, in New York.

### BCBG

BCBG's Max and Lubov Azria used a lot of draped silhouettes with asymmetrical necklines and bodices, cut closer to the body than other space-age clothes seen at Fashion Week.

Some of the best looks were done in smooth, sleek satin, including a cream-colored dress with intricate cutout details and stitching and a lavender hammered satin dress that was gathered in the right places to graze the body.

The Azrias also had a new take on velvet. Instead of it being too formal or stiff, the velvet dresses in dark purple, teal and brown were sultry and seductive.

Shoulder pads, meanwhile, made a powerful statement on sheath-shape dresses, but they also lent themselves to the space-age trend.

### NICOLE MILLER

Tough times call for tough clothes. Nicole Miller was one of a series of designers who, in the early going of New York Fashion Week, has shown her harder edge.

Miller's fall collection was rooted in black, but flashes—or in some cases, slashes—of metallics, purple, red and cobalt blue kept the look from being basic.

Miller did the out-of-this-world vibe best with a crisp, origami-fold blouse with a skinny black pant and black down vest with an oversized collar, and a black wool and organza vest with an in-your-face shoulder flange worn over a slim black stretch dress.

Metallics proved a strong suit, especially in Miller's use of a lacquered slinky viscose fabric. Gunmetal-colored sequins jazzed up a skirt worn with a gray techno-stretch vest.

Miller also wasn't shy to use eye-catching patent leather. It's hard to believe that this is the same designer that just a few seasons ago stood out for her lovely scarf-print dresses. Times have changed.

### YIGAL AZROUEL

The studs helped tell the story at the Yigal Azrouel show. The designer called the collection, shown Friday, "dark and romantic." How about cool?

Azrouel, considered of the class of emerging designers on the cusp of becoming more well known, didn't break great new ground, but he showed that he can successfully mix edginess and sexiness.

Studded belts pulled together slinky fluid dresses, and a beautiful olive-green blouse made more feminine a pair of black space-age peplum pants.

A note to shoppers: Peplums, fabric that jets out at the hips, create a dramatic fashion statement but they're not for everyone because they both widen and draw attention to the hips.

Azrouel also touted super-skinny leg pants, borderlining on leggings, that seem to have made a comeback after spring fashion embraced a looser silhouette.

# Lohan supports girlfriend's sis at NY Fashion Week

AP

Actress Lindsay Lohan attends the Charlotte Ronson Fall 2009 fashion show at Bryant Park, Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 in New York.

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Lindsay Lohan always has a front-row seat at the Charlotte Ronson show.

The 22-year-old actress arrived in style for the Friday afternoon presentation of girlfriend Samantha Ronson's sister's fall collection at New York Fashion Week.

A smiling Lohan, wearing a beige top, black pants and dark nail polish, watched her gal pal deejay in a VIP area before sitting down for the show. Peeking over a wall to talk to a reporter, Lohan said she loves Charlotte Ronson as a person and designer.

"Her clothes are really feminine and they're becoming more formfitting as each season goes on," Lohan said. Ronson's line "is very eclectic and fun and colorful sometimes and then more subdued. I don't know, it's different."

Last September at Fashion Week, Lohan and Samantha Ronson ignited a media frenzy when they sat together in the front row; at the time, they had been drawing speculation over the status of their relationship.

The pair confirmed they were dating shortly afterward.

# Rihanna among topics at V-Day anti-violence lunch

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—The topic of Friday's star-studded V-Day luncheon was the organization's work with women in the Congo. But Jessica Alba, Kerry Washington and other supporters of V-Day, which has raised more than $60 million to stop violence against women and girls worldwide, were also talking about Rihanna.

"When things happen publicly, it just makes it a more universal problem that more people can relate to," said Alba, an annual participant in the V-Day luncheon.

Rihanna was reportedly involved in a domestic dispute with boyfriend Chris Brown last week that resulted in his arrest and booking on charges of making criminal threats. A police statement said the woman who reported the incident was injured, and identified Brown as her attacker. Charges have not yet been filed, and neither Brown nor Rihanna has come forth to comment on the incident.

On Friday, Alba read a poem inspired by the experience of a Congolese woman raped so severely and repeatedly by soldiers that she needed surgery. Washington, who serves on the V-Day board, called violence against women "a social illness that does not discriminate."

"This is a problem that spreads from the Congo to Hollywood," she said. "When it happens to someone famous, it's a tragedy that it happened, but what I hope is that people become less and less afraid to talk about how truly devastating this social illness is."

Rosario Dawson, also a board member, mentioned Rihanna and Jennifer Hudson in her plea to guests to support the V-Day cause.

"What's so incredible is the sympathy, courage, love and compassion that comes from that," she said. "That's what we need to be tapping into and realizing that all of these women, all across the world, are our sisters."

Playwright and activist Eve Ensler, who founded V-Day 11 years ago after the success of "The Vagina Monologues," offered a jarring statistic: one in three women will be raped or beaten in her lifetime.

AP

In this Feb. 10, 2009 file photo, Jessica Alba poses at the premiere of the documentary film "Crips and Bloods: Made in America," in West Hollywood, Calif.

"I'm sadly here to say violence against women is a human thing," Ensler said. "It's epidemic everywhere."

V-Day plans to hold 4,000 grass-roots events this year to educate people about violence against women and the atrocities in the Congo, where girls as young as 10 months and grandmothers in their 80s have been victims of sexual violence and mutilation, Ensler said.

Dr. Denis Mukwege, who received the United Nations Human Rights Prize in 2008 for his work in the Congo, told of how he performs a dozen surgeries each day on rape victims. Vicious rape is so common, he said, that he sees repeat patients. He's also seen wounded women crawl to his clinic door.

V-Day is joining forces with Mukwege's hospital and UNICEF to build a community for survivors of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ensler said.

Oscar nominee Anne Hathaway read a poem at the luncheon and Maria Shriver closed the program by urging guests to spread the word. Among those heeding her call? Charlize Theron, Camryn Manheim, Anne Archer and Sherry Lansing.

# Franco gets bar mitzvah at Hasty Pudding roast

AP

Actor James Franco, right, jokingly milks a cow played by student Chris Schleicher while Franco was honored with Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals' Man of the Year in Cambridge, Mass., Friday Feb. 13, 2009.

**CAMBRIDGE, Mass.** (AP)—James Franco got a spoof bar mitzvah and was forced to milk a "gay" cow on Friday to earn his pudding pot as Harvard's Hasty Pudding Man of the Year.

The 30-year-old Franco, who played Harvey Milk's first love in "Milk," also received a fake bag of marijuana for his role as a clueless pot dealer in "Pineapple Express" at the roast by Harvard's student drama group.

Franco, whose mother is Jewish, said he was not raised Jewish. He said he once told The New York Times he felt deprived because he never had a bar mitzvah. "Yeah, I guess I wasn't a man until tonight," he joked Friday.

The fake ceremony featured a "Rabbi Spider Man" and "Yentl Express" dancers who performed in drag to "Havah Nagila."

"I don't know if this counts in rabbinical law or whatever, but if it doesn't, I do plan to have a bar mitzvah," Franco said.

He wore a blond wig, gold sparkly bra and purple high-heeled pumps to accept the award. "I couldn't ask for anything more. I've made it," he said.

Franco starred in the "Spider Man" trilogy, appeared in TV's "Freaks and Geeks" and portrayed James Dean in the TNT biopic.

The Harvard group honored Renee Zellweger last week as its woman of the year. The 2008 awards went to Charlize Theron and Christopher Walken.

# M.I.A. announces birth of baby boy on MySpace page

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Call her Mamma M.I.A. The Grammy- and Oscar-nominated rapper has announced on her MySpace blog that she has given birth to a son.

The rapper wrote Saturday that her baby is "healthy, fine, beautiful" and the most amazing thing on this planet. She jokes that the two are working together on a tour.

The father is her fiance, musician Benjamin Bronfman. A representative says the couple have declined to release the baby's name.

The "Paper Planes" singer had a scene-stealing performance at the Grammys on Sunday. She strutted on stage with her swollen belly during a performance with Kanye West, Jay-Z, T.I. and Lil Wayne. The rapper says she started going into labor hours later.

AP

In this Sunday, Feb. 6, 2009 file photo, M.I.A. poses for a photograph backstage at the 51st Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

# Obama plans concert for Stevie Wonder

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—The White House is planning a concert this month to honor Stevie Wonder, whose music provided part of President Barack Obama's campaign soundtrack.

The White House says the president and first lady Michelle Obama will present Wonder a Library of Congress award on Feb. 25. The concert will be broadcast the next day on PBS as part of its "Performance at the White House" series.

The award-winning and chart-topping Wonder performed at the Democratic National Convention in Denver on the night Obama accepted his party's nomination. He also performed at a concert during the week of Obama's inauguration.

His song "Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours" became a theme song during the campaign. Obama also used "Higher Ground" during campaign stops.

AP

Stevie Wonder performs at the 40th NAACP Image Awards on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009,in Los Angeles.

# Man forced out of driver's seat is still trying to steer

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Because of a medical condition, my husband of 30 years can no longer drive a car—so now he is driving ME nuts. Not only does he tell me how to drive ("You're too far to the right," or "Watch out for that car!" or " I'd go this way," etc.), but he feels it is his responsibility to remotely lock/unlock the car doors, remotely start the car—anything having to do with the car but drive it. We end up "cancelling" each other out when I try to start the car or lock it.

Please tell me how to solve the dilemma about who should control the functions of the car.

EXASPERATED IN OHIO

**DEAR EXASPERATED: YOU should. However, when a man can no longer drive and his wife must take over, some males regard it as a blow to their masculinity. What your husband is doing is an attempt to reassert himself in his former role, and while it may annoy you, please try harder to understand why he's doing what he's doing and be more tolerant. I know I would.**

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 29-year-old woman who lost my beloved mother a few months ago. A sudden illness took her quickly. I made the difficult decision to remove her from life support when there was no longer any hope.

Mom raised me by herself, and we saw each other every day. She was my best friend. I don't know how to go on without someone to love me like she did.

I would like your opinion on an idea I have. There must be a mother somewhere who has lost an adult child and has love to give. I could reciprocate that love. I do not wish to replace my mom—that would be impossible. She was an amazing woman. I just need someone to care for me that way. I am loved as a wife, niece and friend, but no longer as someone's child. I need to give and receive that kind of unconditional love.

Is this unhealthy? What would be the best way to fulfill my needs? I have tried individual and group therapy. I am financially independent. What are your thoughts?

DAUGHTER OF AN ANGEL IN ALABAMA

**DEAR DAUGHTER: Please accept my deepest sympathy for the loss of your beloved mother. I know you are grieving, but what you have in mind could cause you more problems than you already have.**

**Right now joining a grief support group or talking with a therapist who specializes in the grieving process would be far more helpful for you than immediately trying to fill the hole in your life left by your mother's death. I am concerned that what you are considering could lead to you being cruelly exploited.**

**The love a mother experiences for her child is not interchangeable or replaceable in the way you are thinking of doing it. The validation you are seeking can be found in volunteer work for all kinds.**

■■■

DEAR ABBY: Am I alone in feeling insulted that the only time I am invited to "friends'" homes is when they have something to sell? First it was food storage items, then jewelry and clothing, and now it's food supplements that will "change my life."

Some of these invitations come from people who have been to my home for dinners or parties, but have never reciprocated—until now. Although I would love to be in their homes socially, I have no intention of going for a sales pitch so they can get free stuff, gain points or whatever.

Do I even owe them an RSVP for this kind of invitation?

SOLICITED IN REDWOOD CITY, CALIF.

**DEAR SOLICITED: I understand your feelings, but if you want to continue having a social relationship with these people, then politely RSVP with your regrets. To ignore the invitation would be a breach of good manners.**

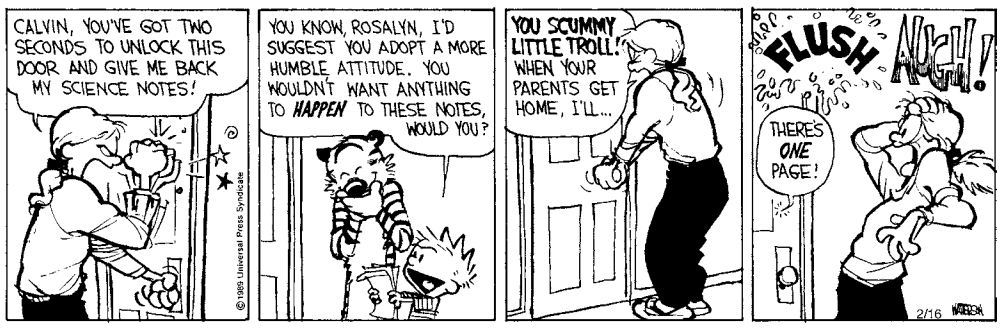
■■■

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

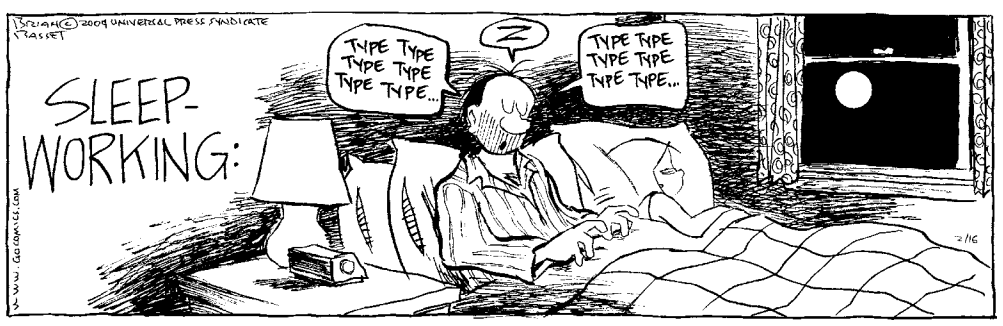

CALVIN, YOU'VE GOT TWO SECONDS TO UNLOCK THIS DOOR AND GIVE ME BACK MY SCIENCE NOTES!
YOU KNOW, ROSALYN, I'D SUGGEST YOU ADOPT A MORE HUMBLE ATTITUDE. YOU WOULDN'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO THESE NOTES, WOULD YOU?
YOU SCUMMY LITTLE TROLL! WHEN YOUR PARENTS GET HOME, I'LL...
FLUSH
AUGH!
THERE'S ONE PAGE!
2/16
WATTERSON
© 1989 Universal Press Syndicate

## Garfield®

By Jim Davis

## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset




## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

## CROSSWORD

*By Eugene Sheffer*

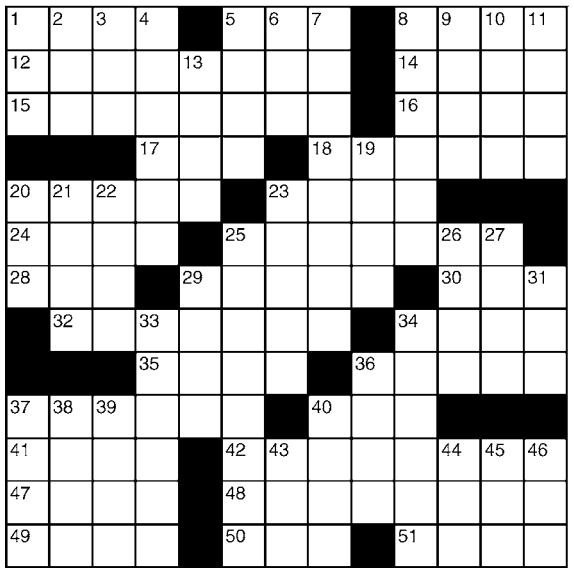
**ACROSS**
1 Erstwhile Peruvian
5 Apiece
8 Summer getaway
12 Really scary
14 Curved molding
15 Pay the tab
16 Memorization method
17 Healthy
18 Forest officer
20 Book of photos
23 Ireland
24 Actress Jessica
25 Nouveau riche type
28 Look at
29 Strike zone's lower boundary
30 Lummox
32 Revolts
34 Hint
35 Drenches
36 1-2-3 dance
37 Chevrolet named for an antelope
40 Listener
41 In a few minutes
42 Fasten your seat belts
47 Fat
48 Attack verbally
49 Sicilian spouter
50 Before
51 Requirement

**DOWN**
1 Conditions
2 Born
3 Tabby, e.g.
4 Wily
5 Versifier
6 Ostrich's cousin
7 Does an encore, literally
8 Eyeball part
9 Enthusiastic
10 Apportion (out)
11 Equal
13 Slender
19 Carney and Garfunkel
20 Six-pack muscles
21 Stead
22 Traffic noise
23 Tools for duels
25 Wobbly
26 "Shake, Rattle, and —"
27 Lacking slack
29 German canal
31 Tasseled hat
33 African nation
34 Late comic George
36 Hear the alarm
37 Capri, for one
38 Castle protection
39 X-rated material
40 "— homo!"
43 Eg. and Syr., once
44 Away from WSW
45 Beehive State native
46 Spacecraft compartment

**Solution time: 24 mins.**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | W | A | B | ■ | P | S | S | T | ■ | L | A | G |
| C | A | R | R | ■ | E | C | H | O | ■ | I | R | E |
| A | N | T | E | ■ | T | A | R | P | ■ | S | I | T |
| R | E | S | T | ■ | A | B | E | ■ | J | A | Z | Z |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | T | A | R | ■ | W | H | O | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| D | O | F | F | E | D | ■ | D | E | N | O | T | E |
| D | E | B | A | R | ■ | ■ | A | F | T | E | R | ■ |
| T | R | I | V | I | A | ■ | A | V | A | T | A | R |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | R | E | D | ■ | N | E | V | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| T | R | E | E | ■ | M | A | N | ■ | R | S | V | P |
| E | O | N | ■ | L | I | R | A | ■ | E | P | E | E |
| N | O | V | ■ | O | R | A | L | ■ | A | I | R | S |
| S | T | Y | ■ | W | E | B | S | ■ | U | N | T | O |

Saturday's answer 2-16



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**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY**: Steffani Brass, 17; John McEnroe, 50; Ice-T, 51; Levar Burton, 52

**Happy Birthday**: Making personal changes to your lifestyle, your appearance and the people you hang out with will help you achieve your goals. Strength of character and mind will be required to follow your own dreams. Don't give in to emotional blackmail or meddling; it's important for you to stand up for what you want this year. Your numbers are 2, 9, 14, 24, 27, 35, 43

**ARIES** (*March 21-April 19*): Don't let emotional troubles interfere with what you need to do. Keeping busy will lead to your success. Not everyone will see things your way but, if you are willing to do the work yourself, you will prove how valuable you are and have good results. ✪✪✪

**TAURUS** (*April 20-May 20*): Someone will take advantage of you if you aren't careful. Do not volunteer for something without knowing the full extent of what's being asked of you. A love interest may entice you to do things that, under any other circumstances, you wouldn't do. ✪✪✪

**GEMINI** (*May 21-June 20*): A good idea that someone has will help you out as well. This is a great time to ask for a raise or to make a professional change but make sure you have a better job to go to before you quit your current position. ✪✪✪

**CANCER** (*June 21-July 22*): A positive change is within your reach. Talk to whoever is in charge and let him or her know what you want to do. Don't take no for an answer and be prepared to use your own money and ideas to get what you want. ✪✪✪✪

**LEO** (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You'll be attracted to someone who motivates you. Make sure you keep things simple. Complicating your personal life by mixing business with pleasure will not bring good results. Separate your emotions from the equation. ✪✪

**VIRGO** (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Change is upon you. Someone you least expect will utilize one of your old ideas for his or her own benefit. Don't let anyone take credit for your contributions. ✪✪✪✪

**LIBRA** (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You've got everything going your way so don't let laziness stop you from getting what you deserve. You have to push forward and take action. Force shouldn't be necessary—use intelligence coupled with a little hard work. ✪✪✪✪

**SCORPIO** (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Be careful how you handle friends, relatives and your lover. Poor communication will lead to misunderstandings and false information will lead to a change of plans. Protect your assets. ✪✪✪

**SAGITTARIUS** (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You may think everything is going well but, behind closed doors, someone is doing you an injustice. Be careful how you present any information you have, especially if it can influence your position. Be upfront about your intentions. ✪✪✪

**CAPRICORN** (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): An emotional attachment to someone may

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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deter you from seeing what this person is actually up to and how it can hurt you in the end. Don't be fooled by compliments or gestures of friendliness. Get the facts and act on them. ✪✪✪✪

**AQUARIUS** (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Emotional deception may lead to a poor decision regarding a past partner. Keep your distance and don't make any moves that you may regret. Your options are greater than you realize. Don't let loneliness be your guide. ✪✪

**PISCES** (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You may know what you want but underlying factors may stand in your way. You have to be straight about your wants and needs if you expect to gain respect and be able to follow through with your plans. Don't let your own uncertainty be your downfall. ✪✪✪✪✪

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## SUDOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** *By Dave Green*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 8 | 7 | | | | 4 | 5 | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | 6 |
| 4 | | | 1 | 5 | 2 | | | 3 |
| | | 6 | 2 | | 4 | 1 | | |
| | | 3 | | 9 | | 8 | | |
| | | 8 | 3 | | 6 | 2 | | |
| 6 | | | 8 | 1 | 7 | | | 2 |
| 3 | | | | | | | | 8 |
| | 7 | 2 | | | | 6 | 1 | |

Difficulty Level ★ 2/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

**Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 8 |
| 3 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 6 |
| 7 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 |
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| 9 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 4 |
| 4 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| 1 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 9 |

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/14

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## WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

**BARNEY'S OF NEW YORK** **Solution: 7 letters**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| O | T | R | E | N | D | Y | U | S | H | S | W | O | H | S |
| U | S | H | O | E | O | E | R | U | T | A | N | G | I | S |
| T | M | Y | A | E | P | I | M | L | L | O | I | S | W | E |
| L | (H) | B | R | I | L | O | T | E | E | F | R | O | D | R |
| E | I | (S) | R | O | R | Y | B | C | T | W | D | E | E | D |
| T | E | N | (O) | E | T | A | T | S | E | N | E | C | S | N |
| S | U | O | E | (P) | L | N | R | S | I | L | I | J | I | O |
| C | G | I | T | A | B | L | E | W | A | R | E | A | G | I |
| S | O | T | H | T | A | B | A | V | P | S | H | S | N | D |
| E | V | O | S | Y | O | T | T | S | N | C | A | A | E | U |
| H | I | M | L | R | E | T | M | C | H | I | C | P | R | T |
| C | S | O | D | M | A | K | E | U | P | C | L | A | S | S |
| T | U | R | E | S | I | D | N | A | H | C | R | E | M | O |
| A | A | P | T | B | E | L | T | S | T | N | E | I | L | C |
| W | L | E | L | A | S | E | S | S | A | L | G | N | U | S |

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**Last Saturday's Answer: Arrow**

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Attorney for Petitioner

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IN THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF, ROLAND BIGALBAL III, Minor Child, by. LAUDICIA C. SANCHEZ, Petitioner. | ) | FCD-GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0075 NOTICE OF HEARING |

Please take notice that the above-stated matter shall come on for hearing on the 9th day of March, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in the Commonwealth Superior Court on the petition of Laudicia Sanchez for her appointment as a general guardian for minor child Rolando Bigalbal III (d.o.b. 09/19/2000) born on Saipan, CNMI. Those wishing to be heard on this matter, please contact Danilo T. Aguilar, Esq. at the Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar, or appear at the Commonwealth Court at the above-stated date and time.

Dated this 9th day of February, 2009.

/s/ Clerk of Court

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Spacious studio furnished, Gualo Rai w/ WiFi .**$300**/mo.
2br, 1bth furnished, CK…….**$350**/mo.
2br, 1bth furnished, Dandan… **$350**/mo.
1br, 1bth furnished, Susupe… **$275**/mo.
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Back-up generator

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5br, 4bth house, Dandan, oceanview……. **$250K**
4br, 3bth house, Dandan, newly renovated ..**$140K**
4br, 2bth house + 2unit 2br apt. As Terlaje ..**$160K**
3br, 1bth house, Gualo Rai, oceanview…… **$110K**
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Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
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### CANCELLATION

**Classified Ads**

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### REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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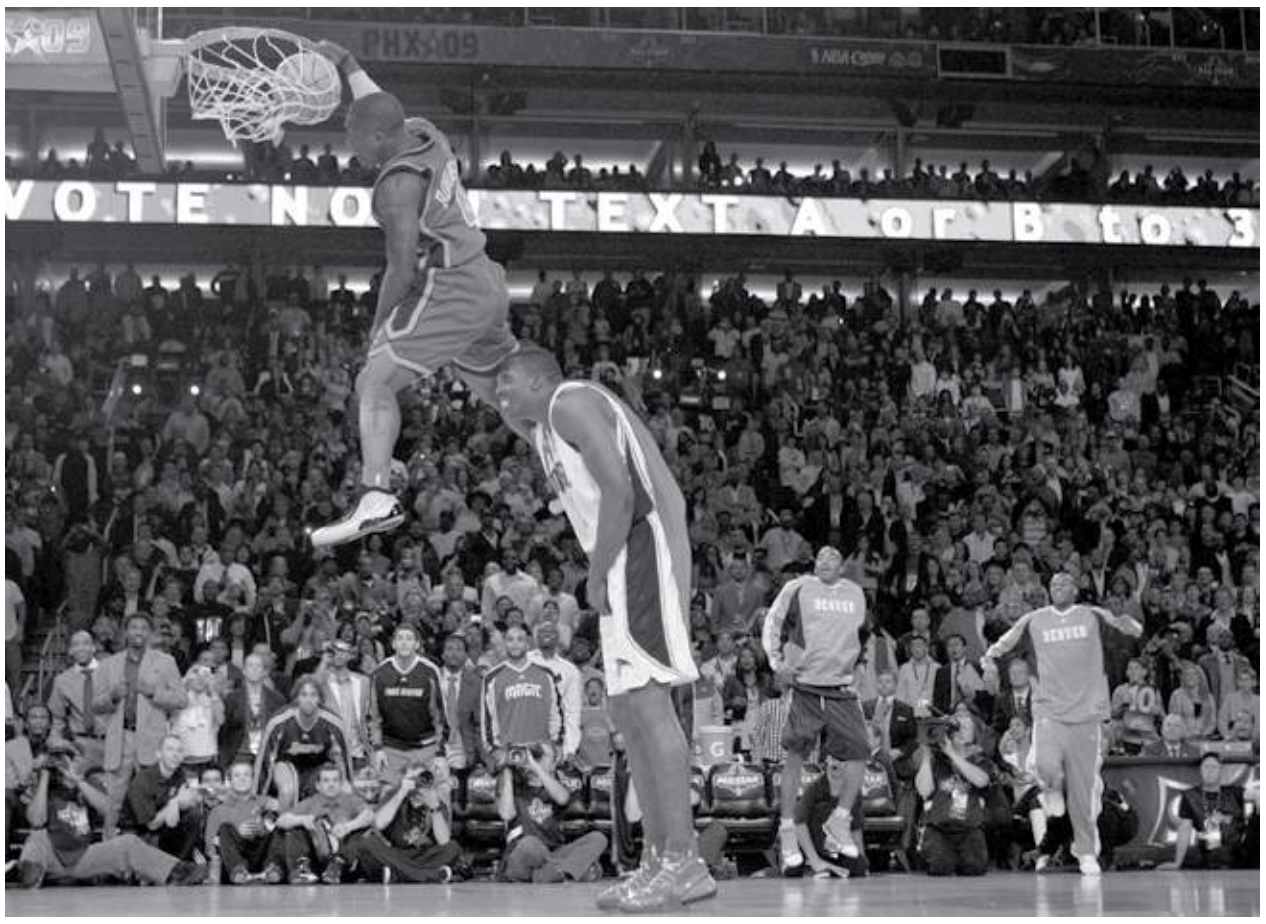
# Robinson wins slam dunk contest



AP

NBA All-Star Weekend basketball Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009, in Phoenix. Robinson won the competition.

**PHOENIX** (AP)—Call him Krypto-Nate.

Nate Robinson tugged on Superman's cape—and won.

The diminutive New York Knicks guard beat defending champion Dwight Howard of Orlando in an electrifying slam dunk contest on Saturday night, winning 52 percent of fans' votes.

Clad in an all-green Knicks uniform with green shoes, Robinson used Howard as a prop in the final round, springboarding over the 6-foot-11 center to jam.

"Dwight was a great sport letting me dunk over him," said the 5-foot-9 Robinson, who also won in 2006.

Howard, who scored a perfect 50 on both of his first-round dunks, performed the most theatrical dunk of the night in the first round.

He disappeared into a phone booth just off the court, emerging with a Superman cape.

Howard waved his arms to the crowd as an 11-foot basket was wheeled onto the floor. Howard took a bounce pass from teammate Jameer Nelson and tomahawked a dunk as U.S. Airways Center exploded.

Robinson had fired up fans by leaping off the back of teammate Wilson Chandler, who crouched on all fours in the lane, and jamming, drawing applause from longtime Knicks fan Spike Lee.

"I got the championship back to New York City," Robinson said.

Portland's Rudy Fernandez and Denver's J.R. Smith were eliminated in the first round.

Earlier, Miami's Daequan Cook connected over and over again when the 3-Point Shootout went to an extra session.

When the long-distance contest went to overtime, Cook found his stroke.

The Heat guard posted the best total of the competition with 19 points in the extra round, cruising past Orlando's Rashard Lewis to win the title and end Jason Kapono's two-year run as king of one of All-Star Saturday's marquee events.

Lewis sputtered in the third session, missing his first 11 shots to finish with seven points.

Cook had forced overtime by hitting his final four shots in the second round of the six-man competition.

"It was very important for me to be focused," Cook said. "I felt this was my opportunity to show people that I should be considered as one of the elite 3-point shooters in the game, so tonight I came out and did that."

Afterward, Cook waved to teammate Dwyane Wade, who had been cheering from a courtside seat. Cook said Wade had encouraged him as the contest approached.

"This was one of the times this weekend that I wanted to take over," Cook said. "We've just been talking about it, and luckily I did it tonight."

Kapono came up one point short in the second round. The Toronto Raptors sharpshooter was trying to become the third player to capture three straight titles in the event, following former Chicago Bulls guard Craig Hodges, who won from 1990-92, and Boston Hall of Famer Larry Bird, who won from 1986-88.

AP

Daequan Cook of the Miami Heat displays the trophy after winning the three-point event during the NBA All-Star Weekend basketball, Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009, in Phoenix.

Mike Bibby of the Atlanta Hawks, Danny Granger of Indiana and Roger Mason of San Antonio were eliminated in the first round. Mason is something of a local villain after hitting a 3-pointer at the buzzer to lead the Spurs to a 91-90 victory over the Phoenix Suns on Christmas Day.

Chicago's Derrick Rose capped his Skills Challenge victory with a double-pump reverse dunk.

Rose defeated New Jersey's Devin Harris in the final round, navigating the obstacle course consisting of dribbling, passing and shooting stations in 35.3 seconds, 4.4 seconds faster than Harris.

"I was just taking my time, going against a great group of guys," Rose said.

Cleveland's Mo Williams and San Antonio's Tony Parker were eliminated after the first round. Williams took third with a time of 37.5 seconds after replacing Orlando guard Jameer Nelson, who has a torn right labrum.

Parker was booed—no surprise given the Spurs' bitter rivalry with the host Phoenix Suns. The crowd was delighted when he finished fourth in 50.8 seconds after missing several jumpers.

In the H-O-R-S-E competition, Kevin Durant capped his All-Star weekend with an amazing comeback to beat O.J. Mayo and Joe Johnson.

Durant faced early elimination after quickly picking up four letters while struggling with his shot outdoors. Mayo had only two letters after knocking out Johnson with an array of shots that included a bucket from the stands, a left-handed jumper and an underhanded free throw.

Durant then began to hit from long range, just as he did Friday when he scored a Rookie Challenge-record 46 points to lead the NBA's sophomores to a 122-116 victory over the rookies. He put another letter on Mayo with a heave from behind a table about 30 feet away, and won it with a deep 3-pointer from the left corner to collect the plastic horse trophy.

Team Detroit—former Piston Bill Laimbeer, present Pistons guard Arron Afflalo and Detroit Shock star Katie Smith—won the Shooting Stars competition, in which players shoot from six locations of increasing difficulty. Team Detroit was runner-up last year and won the contest in 2007.

## Heat swap Shawn Marion for Jermaine O'Neal

**MIAMI** (AP)—Shawn Marion's most memorable play with the Miami Heat was his last.

Hours after Marion's last-second dunk lifted the Heat past the Chicago Bulls, he was traded Friday to the Toronto Raptors in exchange for Jermaine O'Neal, ending a weekslong saga involving the expected deal of former All-Stars.

NBA officials approved the swap Friday afternoon by conference call.

"I developed an unbelievable relationship with Shawn," Heat star guard Dwyane Wade said in Phoenix, where he's part of All-Star weekend. "You're sad to lose a friend on and off the court. At the same time, Shawn and I just had this conversation that it's part of the business and we knew it was a possibility."

Toronto also gets guard Marcus Banks and cash considerations, while Miami will receive forward Jamario Moon and a future first-round draft pick, to come sometime between 2010 and 2015. It's lottery-protected, essentially meaning the first time the Raptors make the playoffs after this season, their first-rounder goes to Miami.

If Miami does not get that first-round pick in 2010, it will get an additional second-round pick that year. The Heat also get a $4.2 million trade exception, which would allow Miami to make a future trade even if the salaries involved don't match.

"This is a win-win for both Toronto and Miami and we wish J.O. and Jamario the best," said Raptors general manager Bryan Colangelo, who is familiar with Marion from his time with the Phoenix Suns.

Miami and Toronto discussed the deal for weeks and, with the trade deadline looming Thursday, decided to move forward. Miami also was linked to trade talk with several other teams, including Phoenix and Sacramento, and perhaps was able to coax the draft pick out of Toronto by waiting so long to make the deal.

The Heat said they called no other teams besides Toronto, but acknowledged fielding calls from others.

Marion—whom Miami acquired just over a year ago from Phoenix for Shaquille O'Neal—was referred to by both Heat coach Erik Spoelstra and president Pat Riley in recent weeks as the team's "second-best player" behind Wade.

He took a bounce pass from Wade and dunked with 1.1 seconds left Thursday night, lifting Miami to a 95-93 win and sparking the sort of on-court, chest-bumping celebration that's rarely seen in the regular season.

It was his last hurrah, though, with Miami.

Marion was a key part of Miami's 28-24 start to this season, averaging 12 points (third on the team behind Wade and Michael Beasley, who now could replace him in the starting lineup at small forward) and a team-best 8.7 rebounds.

"They're getting a great, great player in Shawn," Riley said.

But Marion wanted a long-term contract, something Miami was not willing to provide.

One of Miami's primary areas of concentration, just like every other team in the NBA, is keeping cap space clear for the summer of 2010, when the likes of Wade, LeBron James, Kobe Bryant, Amare Stoudemire and Chris Bosh can become free agents.

And this trade clears another $4.8 million in cap room for that summer; that's what Banks, who had fallen out of the rotation in Miami, would have been owed in the 2010-11 season.

"It sweeps the table, clears the table, for 2010," Riley said.

Plus, it gets Miami a true center in Jermaine O'Neal. The 30-year-old averaged 13.5 points and seven rebounds for Toronto, but has been slowed by injuries. He's owed nearly $23 million next season, but that money won't affect Miami's free-agent plans for 2010.

"It gives us some power down low, which since Shaq left we've been missing," Wade said. "We really need that to compete in the Eastern Conference. Our main thing is we need to get it together fast. Making a trade at this time sometimes makes it tough on teams to get everybody on the same page. Hopefully, we can."

Miami has played an array of players at center this season, including Jamaal Magloire, Joel Anthony, Mark Blount and even Udonis Haslem, a forward who gives up several inches in height and at least 20 pounds to every other true center in the NBA.

The Heat spent about six weeks studying O'Neal, who was evaluated by doctors in South Florida a couple weeks ago, and Riley said he was satisfied the trade makes Miami better.

"You've got to get honest with yourself and say if you're going to compete with the big boys, you've got to get somebody in the middle," Riley said.

Banks averaged 2.6 points in 16 games with Miami this year. He "should benefit from the change of address," Colangelo said.

Moon averaged 7.3 points in 54 games with Toronto, and becomes a free agent after this season. Wade sounded intrigued by the Moon acquisition.

"Jamario Moon is really under the radar as far as what he can do," Wade said.

With Banks gone, Miami has only two true point guards on the roster: Mario Chalmers and Chris Quinn. The Heat do have room to sign another player, so it's likely Riley will pursue either picking up a guard through free agency or making another trade.

# Johnson builds a 4-shot lead at Pebble Beach

Dustin Johnson hits from the second tee at Poppy Hills golf course during the third round of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament in Pebble Beach, Calif., Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009.
AP

**PEBBLE BEACH, Calif.** (AP)—Dustin Johnson poured in one last birdie at Poppy Hills, a quick putt from 7 feet above the hole that broke sharply into cup for a 5-under 67 and a four-stroke lead Saturday in the AT&T National Pro-Am.

There to celebrate his third straight round in the 60s were no more than about two dozen fans.

It was easy to overlook Johnson on Saturday, for the crowds typically flock to Pebble Beach to watch the celebrities and their follies. But if he can put together one more round, the 24-year-old Johnson will be difficult to ignore.

By overpowering the par 5s at Poppy Hills—birdies on all of them, with three eagle attempts—Johnson seized control at Pebble Beach and was poised to capture his second PGA Tour event in his last nine starts.

Johnson, a natural athlete with buckets of talent, didn't get as much attention as other players in their 20s last year, such as Anthony Kim and Camilo Villegas. Then again, his lone victory came at Turning Stone, part of the Fall Series, when the stars stay home.

Another victory would put him in the conversation of rising young stars, put him into the top 50 in the world to qualify for the Accenture Match Play Championship and make him eligible for the first two majors, including his first trip to the Masters.

"I think I proved I can play with these guys," Johnson said. "If I play better a few more times, I'll get all the credit I need."

Johnson was at 15-under 201 and will be in the final group with Mike Weir, who had a 69 at Spyglass Hill.

The big question is whether anyone gets to play.

Spots of sunshine returned to the Monterey Peninsula for the third straight day as the celebrities took over Pebble Beach, but the forecast is gloomy for the final round—an 80 percent chance of rain, expected to be heavy at times.

Pebble Beach has not had a Monday finish since Tiger Woods' great rally in 2000, and it was 10 years ago this week when the late Payne Stewart birdied his final hole for a one-shot lead after 54 holes, which turned into victory when rain shortened the tournament.

Johnson appears to be in good shape either way.

Weir was plodding along at Spyglass Hill until he holed a 25-foot birdie putt on the par-3 fifth hole, then hit the ball as well as he ever has. The former Masters champion hit a hybrid for his second shot to 8 feet on the sixth, a 3-wood to 6 feet on the par-3 seventh, and a 5-iron to 5 feet on the eighth. Trouble is, he missed all the putts.

But he knocked in a 20-foot birdie putt on the last hole for a 69 that put him in the last group Sunday.

"That putt on the last hole made it a little nicer finish," Weir said.

Retief Goosen was not so fortunate. Even after opening the tournament with rounds of 68-64, the two-time U.S. Open champion was concerned about how poorly he was hitting the ball, especially off the tee. That caught up to him at Spyglass, where he shot a 74 to fall five shots behind.

There was a mixture of laughs and groans at Pebble Beach, although sometimes it was tough to tell the celebrity from the pro.

Bill Murray strutted to the hole after a birdie putt, wearing a feather and a heart in his cap in honor of Valentine's Day. Perhaps the most fitting scene was eight-time national surfing champion Kelly Slater going down to the beach - with a wedge, not a board - to play back toward the green. The next shot wound up in some kelp.

And then there was Phil Mickelson, putting up another big number.

Mickelson, who took an 11 on the 14th hole last year, was quietly putting together a good round and looked as though he would break 70 for the first time this year until he hooked a 5-iron off a cart path and out-of-bounds on the par-3 12th, leading to a triple bogey. Lefty rallied, however, smoking a tee shot with the wind at his back on the 18th, leaving him a 5-iron into the green for a two-putt birdie to make the cut on the number.

His comrades in the top five of the world ranking were not so fortunate. Padraig Harrington broke par for the first time this week with a 71 at Spyglass, but he missed the cut. So did Vijay Singh, playing for the first time since minor knee surgery the week after Kapalua.

Johnson's lead is the largest at Pebble Beach since Mickelson had a seven-shot margin in 2005.

"It's probably been in college since the last time I had a pretty big lead," Johnson said.

But he doesn't plan to be conservative, which is not a bad idea. Weir has seen how quickly fortunes can change at Pebble in any weather. It was three years ago when Weir was tied for the 54-hole lead with Arron Oberholser, and three holes into the final round he was five shots behind.

"You don't really go away from your game plan at all," said Johnson, who began the tournament with a 65 at Pebble Beach. "I played well here the first day, and looking forward to tomorrow. Not going to change the game plan at all."

# Peppers hope Panthers grant wish, let him leave

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** (AP)—Julius Peppers was polite, insistent that he has no problems with his coaches and stressed that North Carolina will always be his home.

The four-time Pro Bowl defensive end just doesn't want to play for Carolina anymore—and hopes the Panthers grant the impending free agent his wish by not placing the franchise tag on him.

"If they decide to use the tag on me, the first thing that I'll be doing is requesting a trade," Peppers said Saturday. "Then anything after, basically I don't know what would be the course of action. We'll deal with that when that time comes."

In a conference call with reporters—Peppers' first extended interview since his agent announced last month he wouldn't sign a long-term deal with the Panthers—Peppers focused on his desire to leave coach John Fox's 4-3 defensive system to play outside linebacker in a 3-4 scheme.

And he hopes Carolina fans eventually respect his intentions to leave.

"You've done everything you're supposed to do and played seven years, or worked seven years and when that contract expired, you wanted to do something different and you were told basically, 'I know you did all that and fulfilled what you're supposed to do, but you've still got to stay,'" Peppers said of the negative fan reaction.

"I don't think people would be willing to live under those same standards that they want to place on me. I say put yourself in my shoes and look at the situation instead of being emotional about it."

For Peppers, it's simply about playing in a new system he hopes will better feature his freakish athletic ability. While Peppers wouldn't say which teams he's eyeing, Pittsburgh, New England, the New York Jets and Miami are among those with a 3-4 defense.

"I feel like my abilities could be maximized and I could be even more productive than I have been in the past in a new system," Peppers said. "I feel like I've gotten close to maxing out in the system that I'm in now."

It's the only system the Bailey, N.C., native and former North Carolina star has played in as a pro. The No. 2 overall pick in the 2002 draft, the 6-foot-7 Peppers is Carolina's all-time sacks leader and recorded a career-high 14 1/2 this season, when he was selected to the Pro Bowl again after a one-year absence.

Losing the cornerstone of the defense would be a big blow for the Panthers, who have a big decision to make before Thursday's deadline to designate one player for the franchise tag.

It's complicated by the impending free agency of starting left tackle Jordan Gross, who played under the franchise tag this past season. The Panthers would like to sign Gross to a long-term deal, then they could possibly tag Peppers and trade him.

Placing the franchise tag on Peppers would force the Panthers to offer a one-year deal for a whopping $16.7 million. But it would mean no team could sign him without giving Carolina first-round picks. That would allow the Panthers to work out a trade for less, but still get something in return for losing the key cog of their defensive line.

"I'm not going comment at all," general manger Marty Hurney said, when reached by phone Saturday after Peppers' conference call.

If Peppers left, the remaining defensive ends on the roster would be Tyler Brayton, Charles Johnson and Hilee Taylor, who combined for 11 1/2 sacks last season. The Panthers also do not have a first-round pick in April's draft, something they would likely insist on obtaining in a trade.

Peppers said he has no idea what the Panthers will do, and wouldn't say if he would hold out of offseason workouts and training camp if the Panthers keep him.

# Santana, Angels agree to $30M, 4-year deal

**TEMPE, Ariz.** (AP)—Right-hander Ervin Santana and the Los Angeles Angels agreed to a $30 million, four-year contract Saturday, a day after their scheduled arbitration hearing was postponed.

Santana's deal includes a $13 million club option for 2013 with a $1 million buyout. If the option is exercised, the agreement would be worth $42 million over five seasons.

The 26-year-old is the youngest active big league pitcher with at least 50 wins. He rebounded from a sub-par season in 2007 to go 16-7 with a 3.49 ERA for the AL West champion Angels last year, striking out a career-high 214 in 219 innings with only 47 walks.

Santana is 51-37 with the Angels, and expects to be a mid-rotation starter on a staff that includes John Lackey, Joe Saunders and Jered Weaver. The announcement was made on the day the team began workouts.

"I'm very happy, you guys don't even know," Santana said at a press conference with general manager Tony Reagins. "I wanted to be an Angel."

While most Major League clubs aren't spending much in the sluggish economy, Santana marked the Angels' big signing within a week. They reached a $5 million, one-year deal with free agent outfielder Bobby Abreu.

"He's performed and improved each year," Reagins said. "He stabilizes our rotation. We know that we're going to have him in this organization for years to come and it's gratifying and well-deserved."

Santana started 32 games last year. His numbers were dramatically improved from 2007, when he went 7-14 with a 5.76 ERA over 26 starts.

Santana burst onto the scene with Angels in 2005 with a 12-8 mark and a 4.65 ERA in 23 starts. He followed that with a solid 16-8 record and a 4.28 ERA in 2006.

Reagins said the Angels previously approached Santana about a long-term deal and a one-year contract to avoid arbitration.

Santana said the contract agreement had nothing to do with his decision to not play with his native Dominican Republic in the upcoming World Baseball Classic.

# Philippine Cup gate receipts better last year's figures

**MANILA, Philippines**—For Filipinos, crisis or no crisis, nothing beats watching great basketball action.

Game 7 of the just-concluded 2008-09 KFC PBA Philippine Cup Finals between Talk 'N Text and Alaska drew a crowd of 18,388 at the Araneta Coliseum for the deciding Game 7 of the title series.

The match-up pitting the league's best offensive team opposite the top defensive unit came to a fitting climax as the Tropang Texters watched the Aces miss four straight free throws and an easy undergoal stab in the stretch to escape away with a 93-89 win and claim their first PBA title in six years.

The gripping end to the season-opening tournament capped a great conference that saw the league earn gate receipts of P35,638,213.

The amount is higher compared to the same stretch of the 2007-08 season when cash registers rang a total of P33,173,049.47 as Sta. Lucia beat Purefoods in a similar Game 7 duel to win the Philippine Cup.

"Now fans know when a basketball game is good or not. The championship series between Talk `N Text and Alaska showcased a battle between two of the league's top teams in the Philippine Cup, and they (PBA fans) came and watched it," said PBA commissioner Sonny Barrios.

The PBA head honcho underscored the support extended by the Alaska and Talk 'N Text organizations for the success achieved during the Philippine Cup Finals.

Barrios also cited the efforts made by the Talk 'N Text franchise which provided novelties such as Higantes and live bands that circled and played at the venue's gate, giving the do-or-die game a fiesta atmosphere.

Talk 'N Text also brought in a helicopter that rained confetti around the Big Dome before the match. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

## HUSTLERS

*From Page 28*

lagomez, Senate President Pete P. Reyes, and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios delivered inspirational speeches before some 2,000 people in attendance.

SLLB president Michael A. Borja thanked the team managers and their sponsors for their effort to form their teams and hope for a successful season.

District administrator James A. Ada also lauded the enthusiasm among the participating players.

There are close to 500 players from the total of 31 teams that are competing this year, including 14 in the Major Division.

The invocation was given by Fr. Florentino "Noynoy" Recaido while the benediction was delivered by pastor Roger Abe.

The ceremonial pitch was thrown by Villagomez, while Bob Coldeen served as master of ceremony.

Two other games were still in progress as of press time at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field. Defending champion Jets were taking on the Fielders in the Senior Division, while the Fielders were up against San Roque D'9ers in the Junior Division.

Games today start at 9am between Red Sox and the Patriots in the Junior division, while San Roque D'9ers will face Kagman Lion King at 11am in the Senior Division.

Ol'Aces will meet the Fielders in the Junior Division at 1pm and Ol'Aces battle the Jets at 3pm.

Games in the Big League Division will start tomorrow at 6pm between the Tanapag Falcons and the Hustlers also at the Palacios ballfield.

The Ol'Aces will take on the Fielders on Thursday, Feb. 19, and Team Aztecs takes on San Roque D'9ers at 6:30pm on Saturday, Feb. 21.

The 2009 Board of Directors is composed of Borja (president), Vicente M. Taitano (vice president), Rose Igitol (secretary), Annie DLG. Flores (treasurer), Vicente A. Manalo (safety officer), Tony Rogolifoi (chief statistician), Walter Macaranas (player agent) and James "Miwata" Elidechedong (umpires representative).

## OL'ACES

*From Page 28*

at the end of the third quarter, 73-77.

Freddie Pelisamen, Elias Rangmar, Peter Camcho, and Gabriel White stepped up for the upset-conscious Ol'Aces, who rallied back in the fourth quarter to win.

Pelisamen was scoreless in the first quarter before catching fire in the next three periods to lead the Ol'Aces with 33 points, including nine in the free throw line.

Lizama scored five in the first, two in the second, and eight in the third but he was scoreless in the fourth for a total of 15 points. Rangamar finished with 11, while White and Camacho had nine each.

Bonbon Cadagat led Quichocho Law Office with his 22 points, including four hits from 3-point range.

Leo Itaas scattered 19 points, while Edmark Mendoza and Larry Palero chipped in 14 and 11, respectively, for Quichocho Law Office.

That win snapped their two-game losing skid following a 2-0 start. The team is now 2-3.

**Ol'Aces 100 –** Pelisamen 33, Lizama 15, Rangamar 11, White 9. Camacho 9, Iginoef 8, Olaitiman 8, Renguul 4, Omar 3, Tudela 0.

**Quichocho Law Office 96 –** Cadagat 22, Itaas 19, Mendoza 14, Palero 11, Lerio 9, Demapan 8, Umali 7, Moises 3, Capalad 2, Jugos 1.

**Scoring by quarters:** 20-17, 44-46, 73-77, 100-96.

## CALVO

*From Page 28*

points came from Calvo—that finished off the Lady Rays.

Meagan Sablan was the only other scorer for Mt. Carmel in the third quarter with four points, while Justalyn Camacho, May Nakajima, Amanda Tudela, and Taylor Ada added two points each for the Lady Knights in the fourth quarter.

Melda Mendiola scattered a total of 16 markers to lead the Lady Rays, while Dayline Joseph shot eight points. Audrey Castro and Jiann Kim added four each, while Francine Babauta and Wilani Sikyang had three and two, respectively.

With the win, the Lady Knights improved to their second win in five games.

The Lady Rays, on the other hand, remained winless after six outings.

**MCS 44 –** Calvo 32, Sablan 4, J. Camacho 2, Nakajima 2, Tudela 2, Ada 2, R. Camacho 0, Olarte 0, Lebria 0, Cielo 0, Burger 0.

**SSHS 39 –** Mendiola 16, Joseph 8, Castro 4, Kim 4, Babauta 3, Sikyang 2, Duenas 0, Maratita 0, Maui 0, Flores 0.

**Scoring by quarters:** 9-12, 20-22, 28-30, 39-44.

## O'NEAL

*From Page 28*

that be ... including me."

Shaq smiled and reached for the hot tea with lemon sitting in front of him.

"Bro, I'm soaking it all in, yes," Shaq said when asked about the reflective mood. "I'm happy about it. ... I don't know how many years I thought I would play when I came out of college. I knew I wanted my first deal to be $8 million for 10 years ... $800,000 a year sounded fabulous. I wanted to build a house in Texas and buy my mother a house. Then Jon Koncak signed for $5 million a year and I said to myself, `If this guy can get $5 million a year, I've got to get 15."

He's done worlds better than that, of course. Shaq's NBA salary is $21 million this season. Basketball has been fabulous to Shaq and he's done the game fabulously in return. "He's been the face of the league since Michael Jordan retired," Chauncey Billups said. Yao Ming, who has become especially close to Shaq, said: "I can't imagine the game without Shaq. ... No way it will be as fun without him."

The last year or two would be a whole lot more fun for Shaq if his current team, the Phoenix Suns, was the threat most of us thought it would be. But the way things are going, with Amare Stoudemire probably being traded Monday, the Suns are going to miss the playoffs. And Shaq, except for his rookie season, has never missed the playoffs.

"Can't figure it out," he said of the Suns' woes. "On paper, we're a pretty good team. Thing is, it's the first team I've been on where everybody really likes each other. We really do. We hang out together. There's no undermining talk from anybody. They're really nice people."

Missing the playoffs would be a regrettable way to end for a team as entertaining as Phoenix has been in recent years. A string of poor personnel decisions beginning four years ago slowly killed the Suns. But that won't diminish Shaq's legacy. His time as a dominant player is eclipsed only by the dominance of his personality. "As great as he is," Billups said, "what's just as important has been his great heart, his great spirit, the youthful joy he brings to the game."

A very real problem for the NBA, after Shaq, is finding a star personality that sells. Who's going to be the cut-up? Who's going to mug for the cameras? Who's going to carry on the foolishness and lighten the mood and make crazy commercials and rap freestyle and break dance? Who's going to chase squealing children around hotel lobbies like a big Shaq Monster?

"Ever since I was in Miss Swann's fourth-grade class in Hinesville, Georgia," Shaq said, "I was silly ... always silly. My mother told me being this silly would either make me a lot of money or get me in a lot of trouble. ... I had this marketing professor at LSU who told me, `Shaquille, big guys don't sell. ... You're not going to make a lot of money off the court.' ...

"I wanted to have Jordan's dominance, Magic's smile and my silliness," he said. "That was my formula."

Most players, when asked to identify an all-star with some of Shaq's crowd-pleasing charm, mention Dwight Howard of Orlando. "Dwight has some of the characteristics," Dwyane Wade, Shaq's former Miami Heat teammate said. "But there's never going to be another Shaq. Never."

Sitting no more than 30 feet away from Shaq, Phil Jackson was talking to a handful of reporters and the subject of Shaq was broached. The coach of the West All-Stars, and of the Lakers during three drama-soaked championship years, was asked several times whether a recent lovefest after years of antagonizing each other means the three might reunite this season. Jackson's best answer was, "There's always room for old crocodiles who can roam the lane."

Told the line, Shaq laughed so hard his body shook, and he said, "He's right."

The topic of Kobe, Phil and Shaq is irresistible. Every lengthy conversation with any one of the three inevitably moves in that direction.

"We're the most dramatical duo," Shaq said, reaching for a way to describe the depth of the drama between him and Kobe. "We haven't played together for five years, yet everybody still talks about Shaq and Kobe, Kobe and Shaq. If we had our own reality show, it would be the best show ever. There are times we won't forget, times history will never forget. Sunday's going to be like old times, like good times. What happened? Me, Phil and Hollywood happened. I, at times, would say stuff just to be saying it. ... A lot of stuff was said, I think, just to keep the drama going. I'm more mature about it now. Let me say this, though: We never had a problem, not one, in practice or in the games. Never did, bro."

Would he tone it down if he had the chance to do it all over again? "I'd do it the same way," he said. "If we could go back in time, I'd go back to the year we lost (to Detroit in the Finals in 2004) and talk even more smack."

Nearby, Ray Allen of the Celtics is talking about Shaq being perhaps the last big man a team could dump the ball into in the low post and produce nearly 30 points and 15 rebounds almost on demand. Nobody since Wilt has been that big, that mobile, that powerful ... that ridiculously enormous. "His shoe," Allen said, "is like a house for small animals."

Someone asked Shaq who will be the next great big man in the old-school tradition of big men. Without hesitation, Shaq says: "Yao Ming. I understand why everybody loves Yao. ... He's an honorable man. He's a great man."

Reporters from Europe, from Asia, from Los Angeles and Miami surrounded Shaq to ask questions during Friday afternoon's media session with the all-stars. The conversation went on and on, past the appointed time. Some of the international journalists wanted pictures with Shaq, for keepsakes, and he obliged. The Life and Times of Shaquille O'Neal is what the day turned into, and nothing could have been more appropriate.

No, there will never be anything like Shaquille O'Neal. "I'll sit down one day," he said, "and open a book ... and I'll see top five in scoring ... not bad. Top 10 in blocked shots ... not bad. Four or five rings ... not bad. Everybody liked him ... not bad."

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

### AT&T PEBBLE BEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM SCORES

**PEBBLE BEACH, California** (AP)– Scores Saturday from the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, a $6.1 million US PGA Tour event on three par-72 courses: 6,816-yard Pebble Beach Golf Links; 6,953-yard Poppy Hills; and 6,944-yard Spyglass Hill:

**Third Round**

| | |
|---|---|
| Dustin Johnson | 65b-69s-67p–201 |
| Mike Weir | 67p-69b-69s–205 |
| Retief Goosen | 68p-64b-74s–206 |
| Bob Estes | 68p-72b-67s–207 |
| Mark Calcavecchia | 67p-69b-71s–207 |
| D.J. Trahan | 67b-73s-68p–208 |
| Kevin Chappell | 68s-72p-68b–208 |
| Bill Lunde | 67b-70s-71p–208 |
| Chris Stroud | 69p-69b-70s–208 |
| Sean O'Hair | 71p-68b-70s–209 |
| Shigeki Maruyama | 69b-73s-67p–209 |
| Mark Brooks | 68b-69s-72p–209 |
| Kenny Perry | 71p-70b-68s–209 |
| Vaughn Taylor | 66b-75s-69p–210 |
| Charley Hoffman | 66s-70p-74b–210 |
| Ted Purdy | 68b-72s-70p–210 |
| Jason Day | 67b-75s-68p–210 |
| Spencer Levin | 71b-70s-69p–210 |
| Charlie Wi | 68b-69s-73p–210 |
| Matt Kuchar | 71b-71s-68p–210 |
| Kevin Stadler | 71p-71b-68s–210 |
| Derek Fathauer | 71p-71b-69s–211 |
| Nick Watney | 75p-69b-67s–211 |
| Y.E. Yang | 69b-70s-72p–211 |
| Tim Herron | 72s-68p-7 1b–211 |
| Jeff Quinney | 68b-73s-70p–211 |
| Len Mattiace | 69b-72s-70p–211 |
| Jeff Overton | 69b-70s-72p–211 |
| Tim Clark | 71s-71p-69b–211 |
| Davis Love III | 69b-72s-70p–211 |
| Richard S. Johnson | 71p-70b-70s–211 |
| Michael Allen | 67b-71s-73p–211 |
| Arjun Atwal | 68b-73s-71p–212 |
| Jeff Klauk | 73p-72b-67s–212 |
| Steve Lowery | 70b-69s-73p–212 |
| John Mallinger | 72b-71s-69p–212 |
| Jim Furyk | 71s-70p-71b–212 |
| Aron Price | 68p-69b-75s–212 |
| Michael Letzig | 69s-73p-71b–213 |
| James Oh | 73p-72b-68s–213 |
| David Mathis | 71b-75s-67p–213 |
| Glen Day | 73s-70p-70b–213 |
| Rich Beem | 66b-75s-72p–213 |
| Pat Perez | 73s-71p-69b–213 |
| Scott Gutschewski | 71b-72s-70p–213 |
| Frank Lickliter II | 72p-71b-70s–213 |
| Robert Garrigus | 65s-71p-77b–213 |
| Peter Tomasulo | 71p-70b-72s–213 |
| Greg Owen | 68b-73s-72p–213 |
| Mark Wilson | 70p-73b-70s–213 |
| Troy Matteson | 73b-71s-69p–213 |
| Charles Howell III | 72s-70p-71b–213 |
| Charles Warren | 74b-69s-70p–213 |
| Jay Williamson | 70p-75b-68s–213 |
| J.J. Henry | 71p-72b-71s–214 |
| Jason Dufner | 75b-68s-71p–214 |
| Chris Smith | 70b-75s-69p–214 |
| Brad Adamonis | 71b-72s-71p–214 |
| Marc Leishman | 72p-73b-69s–214 |
| Mathew Goggin | 70s-73p-71b–214 |
| David Duval | 73b-72s-69p–214 |
| K.J. Choi | 69b-75s-70p–214 |
| Phil Mickelson | 72s-71p-71b–214 |
| Rick Price | 70p-72b-72s–214 |
| Jimmy Walker | 71p-73b-70s–214 |
| Matt Jones | 71p-71b-72s–214 |
| J.B. Holmes | 74p-68b-72s–214 |
| Brendon de Jonge | 69b-74s-71p–214 |

**By The Associated Press**

## LOCAL SCORES

### BUDWEISER CAGING STANDINGS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IT& E | 4 | 1 |
| CNMI Nationals | 3 | 1 |
| Ol'Aces | 3 | 1 |
| Docomo | 2 | 2 |
| Quichocho Law Office | 2 | 3 |
| Runnin' Rebels | 1 | 4 |
| Diamond Auto Fixers | 0 | 3 |

### MISO STANDINGS

**Boys**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| MHS | 4 | 0 |
| KHS | 2 | 2 |
| SSHS | 0 | 4 |

**Girls**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| MHS | 5 | 0 |
| KHS | 4 | 2 |
| MCS | 2 | 3 |
| SSHS | 0 | 6 |

# The Week in Sports

# Wong, Kabiriel shine, Set/Natara win softball tilt

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Individual athletes Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel and Rezne Wong shared the sports spotlight last week with Set/Natara and awardees of Northern Marianas Athletics 2008 Athlete of the Year banquet.

Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel recorded the fastest time in Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation's First Enticer Race held last Feb. 7 in Marpi.

Kabiriel conquered the 500-meter swim, six-mile bike, and two-mile run triathlon in a time of 39:09.

Meanwhile, the first woman to arrive at the finish line was veteran multi-sport athlete and Pacific Islands Club executive Kanae Quinn, who clocked in at 44:09.

Wong, for his part, admitted he was humbled after being invited to take part in the 50th Japan Swimming Championships set this month.

The Marianas High School senior was invited to the high-level meet after an official of the Japan Swimming Federation noticed his prowess while competing in the 2009 Junior Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Guam last month.

"I had no idea that I was going to Japan Open until a few days after I got back from Guam. One moment that still sticks to my mind is when I was cooling down in Lane 1 after a race. I was breathing to the left [I usually breath to my right] and I saw a man wearing the Japanese National Team uniform, standing on the pool deck, looking at me. I just kept on swimming, thinking that he was just looking at me for no apparent reason. Little did I know that he was JSF's Kiho Abe, who chaired the organizing committee for JPP," Wong said.

NMA capped a very successful 2008 season, which included Saipan's hosting of the 2008 Oceania Championships and Grand Prix, by giving out awards to its top athletes during the NMA Annual Awards Banquet held Thursday night at the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion.

Named 2008 NMA Athletes of the Year in their respective age groups were Neghar Rastguiy and Maxten Doone (8-and-under); Gabrielle Race and Jesse Brel (10-and-under); Ilia Corella and Angelo Jones (12-and-under); Lia Rangamar, Damart Teregeyo, and Brandon Phillip (14-and-under); Jacque Wonenberg, Jenequa Benavente, and Jeusus Iguel (18-and-under); and Yvonne Bennett and Tyrone Omar (Open). Long distance runners Jack Kabiriel and Mamiko Oshima-Berger were selected Road Runners of the Year, and together with the Athletes of the Year in various age groups, they received trophies from NMA president Kurt Barnes and vice president Lou Wabol.

Ruling the 7th Annual Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament Team was Set/Natara, which beat Team Becks/No Zone in the finals, 6-3, last Sunday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

It was a repeat of Set's win earlier in the day over the same team when they met for the first time in the semifinals of the winners' bracket, 8-7.

In other news, the 2009 Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Invitational Basketball League kicked off Monday night at the Tinian Municipal Gymnasium with three teams opening their campaign in the inaugural caging on a winning note.

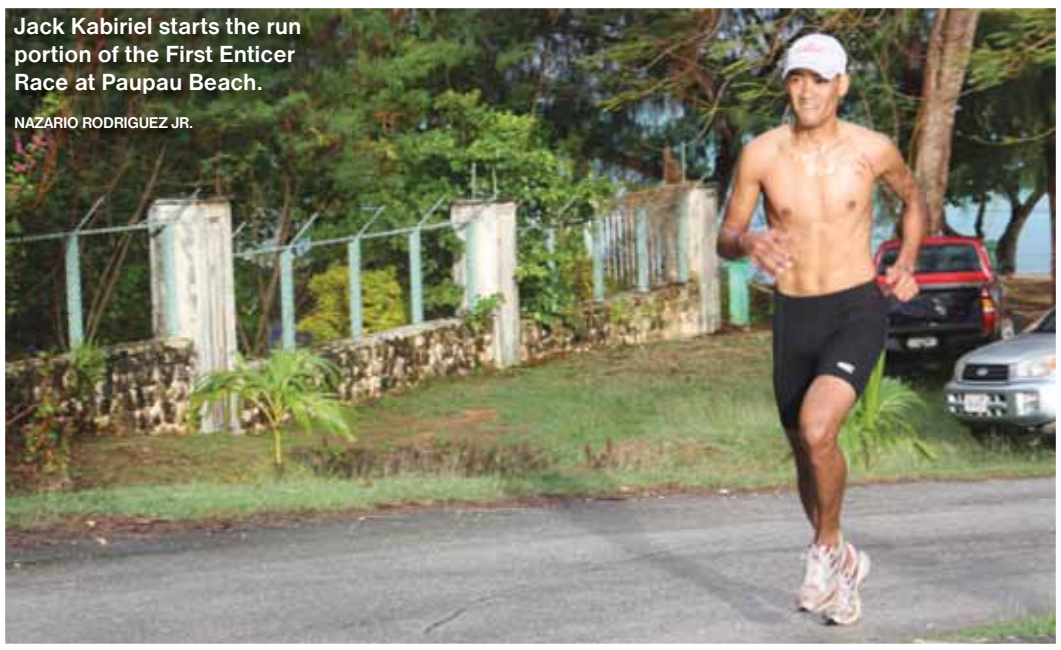
Saipan World Resort posted the closest win in the triple-threat opener outlasting host Club TDHC, 72-68, in the first game.

Hyatt Regency Saipan drew 30-plus points from Jericho Cruz and Cris Arreza to beat Pacific Islands Club, 107-94, in the second game. In the third game, Aqua Resort Club outlasted Asia Pacific Hotel, Inc., 85-73.

Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association also kicked off the 2009 Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament and it attracted 104 participants last Feb. 7 at the American Memorial Park.

Last Wednesday also saw the NMIVA Two-man Beach Volleyball League start on the Pacific Islands Club sand court with eight teams joining the Marianas Cup tune-up competition.

The past week also saw action continue in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League, 2008-2009 MISO Basketball League, 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League, and the Budweiser Inter-Government/Business Slow-pitch Softball League.



Jack Kabiriel starts the run portion of the First Enticer Race at Paupau Beach.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Woo Suk Chang serves against Bradley Brostrom during their game in the boys' 18-and-under singles division of the 2009 Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament at the American Memorial Park tennis courts last Feb. 7.

Rezne Wong swims in the 100m breaststroke race during Saturday's SSC Heptathlon Virtual Meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Winning pitcher John Terlaje hurls the ball in the seventh inning for newly crowned champion The Set/Natara, which won in the finals over Team Becks/No Zone, 6-3, in the 7th Annual Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament last Feb. 8 at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ, JR.

IT&E's Kae Bernardo, left, and Peter Mendiola, right challenges the shot of Quichocho Law Office's Bart Demapan during their game in the Budweiser caging at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Docomo's Ryan Sanciangco goes for a layup against two Dollar Days defenders during their game in the Navy Hill caging at the JP Centre Basketball Court in Garapan. Docomo lost the game, but recovered quickly with an 88-84 win over Uncle Ben last Feb. 8.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participating teams in the 2009 Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Invitational Basketball League pose for a group photo in front of Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Monday during the opening of the competition.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Dolphins' Zack Tudela drives against two Kagman defenders and later made a buzzer-beating jumper that sent the MHS-KHS tiff into overtime Wednesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

**Robinson wins slam dunk contest**

The diminutive New York Knicks guard beat defending champion Dwight Howard of Orlando in an electrifying slam dunk contest on Saturday night, winning 52 percent of fans' votes. 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

**Wong, Kabiriel shine, Set/Natara win softball tilt**

Individual athletes Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel and Rezne Wong shared the sports spotlight last week with The Set/Natara and awardees of Northern Marianas Athletics 2008 Athlete of the Year banquet. 27



# Hustlers draw first blood as season starts

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Hustlers sustained a good start to pull out a 7-4 win over the Dragons in yesterday's opening day of the 2009 Saipan Little League Baseball.

Roy Saralu, Payton Lizama, and Cody Kaipat each scored in the top of the second inning to spark the Hustlers' spirited game before a huge crowd at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Baseball Field.

Two other games were scheduled as of press time yesterday in the Major division, including Red Sox against Tanapag Braves and the Ol'Aces against Survivors.

Today's games will start at 9am between Kagman Little Lions and As Matuis Twins, A's vs. Team Shell, Team IT&E vs. Jets, and JPO Enforcers vs. Little Falcons.

Games in the Junior and Senior divisions have also started yesterday over at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

But the first game of the 2009 Little League season between the defending champion Kagman Lion Heart and Ol'Aces was called off due to time constraints.

The two teams were tied at 5-5 after four full innings.

Organizers said this will be rescheduled to a later date.

Kagman's Jonah Flores singled then went on to score the first run of the season on a triple by Lamarc Iguel right in the top of the first inning.

After Greg Iskawa tied it with a run in the bottom first, Carol Camacho gave the Lion Heart a 2-1 lead in the top of second, but Ol'Aces grabbed the lead with four runs from Ramon Camacho, Noel Sanchez, Iskawa, and Richard de la Cruz, in that order.

Then Iguel and Caleb Arriola reached home plate anew for Kagman in the third and Flores scored his second run in the game on base on ball by Iguel in the fourth before the officials called off the game.

Before the game, Saipan Little League Baseball Association officials and top government officials led by Lt. Gov. Tim Vil-

See HUSTLERS on Page 26

Six-year-old Darvince Mananio slides at home plate during a practice home run that signaled the opening game between Hustlers and Dragons in the Major Division of the 2009 Saipan Little League yesterday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Baseball Field. The Hustlers won, 7-4.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

# Ol'Aces edges Quichocho Law Office in BANMI

Ol'Aces' Gabriel White goes up for a perimeter jumper against Quichocho Law Office defenders Edmark Mendoza and John Pantaleon in their game last Friday night in the 2009 BANMI/ Budweiser Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Ol'Aces blew an early lead but rallied in the final stretch en route to a morale-boosting 100-96 victory over Quichocho Law Office in the 2008-2009 BANMI/ Budweiser Basketball League Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Mike Olaitiman scored eight of Ol'Aces' total 20 points in the first quarter to spearhead his team a 20-17 lead.

After that, he failed to score the rest of the way and Ol'Aces fell behind by two points at halftime, 44-46, and by four points

See OL'ACES on Page 26

# Calvo fires 32 to lead Lady Knights past Southern

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Noelle Calvo went berserk with 32 points to lead Mt. Carmel School to a 44-39 victory over Saipan Southern High School in the girls varsity division of the 2008-2009 MISO Basketball League Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Calvo scored all of the Lady Knights' nine points in the first quarter and all of 11 in the second quarter but the team fell behind by two points, 20-22, going into the second half of play.

She also had four of her team's total of eight in the second quarter and half of the Lady Knights' total of 16 in the crucial fourth period.

Both teams came up with eight points each in the third quarter as the Lady Knights relentlessly tried to catch up but still trailed by two points before the start of the final canto.

Opportunity came knocking when the Lady Knights strung together a 16-9 run in the fourth quarter—with eight of those

See CALVO on Page 26

By MICHAEL WILBON
*(c) 2009,* The Washington Post

# O'Neal, long 'the face of the NBA,' reflects on it all

**PHOENIX**—First, Shaq was in a suit. He was the only all-star in a suit. And a tie. And vest ... like it was a special occasion that needed to be formally observed. Second, he was more reflective than usual, slipping comfortably into stories about the good old days, even the days that weren't so good at the time. You always have to lean in and pay close attention when Shaq is speaking in that raspy baritone, but this was a particularly difficult listen because he had laryngitis.

Even so, his message was unmistakable. The Shaq farewell tour had kicked off on this, his 15th NBA All-Star Weekend. Don't get me wrong; there was nothing somber about his mood or the conversation. Shaquille O'Neal was as playful as ever, as energetic as ever, as mischievous as ever. But he also was coming to grips with the reality that this could be his final all-star appearance, that being adored by his peers, by the basketball public, and even by the international media is something he should take particular pleasure in now.

The years of sparring with Kobe Bryant and Phil Jackson, whom Shaq will rejoin for Sunday's All-Star Game as a member of the West team, has turned to love taps. All is well. "All the drama in those years," Shaq said, "was planned by the powers

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